

# Get to Know Me

## My Students' Background

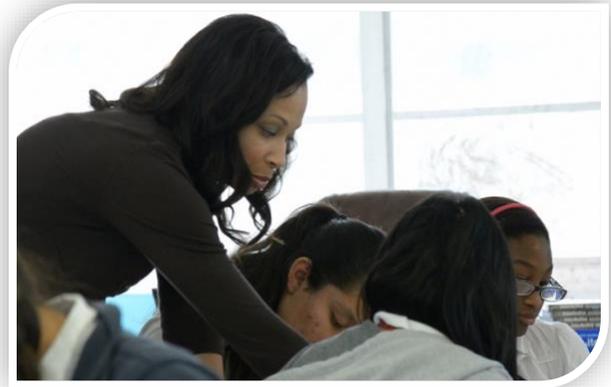
Identify and monitor the literacy, language, and content needs of all students.

**IP Rubric** PL-2, I-7, I-9

- How can I get to know students' personal stories?
- How can I discover information about each student's content and language proficiency?
- How can I monitor my students' progress?

### Why it works:

There is great diversity in students' literacy skills and content knowledge. Getting to know students' personal stories, learning histories, and preferences helps us **prepare the learners** and identify their literacy, language, and content needs to continuously monitor progress. Robert Marzano and other researchers confirm that students learn more when we give specific, timely feedback and an opportunity to improve based on that feedback. Ways to get to know students' background include surveys, quick writes, and creative assignments.



### Suggested strategies:

[Surveys](#)  
[Portfolio](#)  
[Student Conferences](#)  
[Tracking Growth](#)  
[Graphic Organizer](#)  
[Circulate](#)

### Tech tools:

[OnTrack](#)  
[A4E Dashboard](#)  
[Lead4Ward](#)  
[Proficiency Level Descriptors](#)

### In the **Get to Know Me** routine, we regularly:

- ☑ Get to know students' personal stories, histories, and preferences.
- ☑ Discover and document information about students' literacy and content status using data history.
- ☑ Create and maintain student learner profiles for each student using a portfolio.
- ☑ Assess students' prior knowledge for each unit.
- ☑ Plan extra support or extension.
- ☑ Monitor progress.

## Classroom implementation:

### ☑ Get to know students' personal stories, histories, and preferences.

Talking with and listening to students could reveal much about who they are and what they care about. You can use **surveys** and informal writing to collect information allowing the use of **native language** and providing **sentence stems** and/or **paragraph frames**. Avoid making assumptions about students' histories and situations. Learn about their funds of knowledge from parents and colleagues.



### ☑ Discover and document information about students' literacy and content status using data history.

Consult **OnTrack** and the **A4E Teacher Dashboard** to gather data from past assessments, including **TELPAS proficiency ratings** as data beginning points. Engage in collaborative PLCs with peers throughout the year to discuss each student's content and literacy strengths and needs, looking at a variety of sources including writing samples and the results of reading assessments, such as **Benchmark Running Records** and **Universal Screener**.

### ☑ Create and maintain student learner profiles for each student using a portfolio.

It is worth the initial time investment to create and maintain a learner profile for each student using a **portfolio** to add representative work samples. Review the information at regular intervals through **student conferences** and colleagues. It's important to monitor students' progress across all domains: **listening**, **speaking**, **reading** and **writing** using the **Proficiency Level Descriptors**. A **portfolio** can be as simple as a folder kept on your desk or one created digitally.

### ☑ Assess students' prior knowledge for each unit.

It is helpful to assess students' knowledge prior each unit of instruction. Formative assessments are important to analyze students' readiness throughout the learning process. Provide students with **graphic organizers**, **sentence stems** and/or **paragraph frames** and allow beginners to use their **native language**, and/or **visuals** to illustrate concepts as needed. **Tracking growth** helps you reflect on student work alone or during PLCs with colleagues.

### ☑ Plan extra support or extension.

When planning instruction, make sure that your plans include enough scaffolding or extension for all **proficiency levels** to ensure each student's success, e.g. **graphic organizers**, **sentence stems** and/or **paragraph frames** and allowing beginners to use their **native language**, and/or **visuals**. **Portfolios** can help inform instructional decisions for students of all levels. Think about which students could benefit from **Huddle**.

### ☑ Monitor progress.

In brief **student conferences**, involve students by **tracking growth**, give them precise feedback, and set goals for improvement. Ask questions and listen in one-on-one exchanges. When you **circulate** as students engage in **Let's Talk** and **Pen/cil to Paper**, take a few seconds to connect and give feedback.