

Unit 4 Introduction  
**Know Your Players: Differentiating for ELLs**

Welcome to unit 4. Not all students process information the same way or at the same rate for that matter. Part of the reason is that students' background knowledge is very unique to their individual experiences and perspectives. In order to help each student reach our intended objective(s), it is often necessary to provide background knowledge—or fill in gaps where prerequisite knowledge is missing. Other students, however, may already have the prerequisite exposure needed to move forward without spending time on what would be review for him or her. In such cases, different learning activities are necessary in order to provide each student with appropriate challenge.

This unit is all about knowing who your students are and identifying their individual learning needs. You will think about students' interests, learning styles, and language readiness as critical components of the student-centered differentiated instruction. Equipped with important information about *who* your students are, and how they learn best, you will be able to make informed curriculum and instructional decisions.