FIGURE 7.4 FLOWCHART FOR DETERMINING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE TO TEACH MLS

1. Do non-MLs have background knowledge on the topic? Teachers must ensure that MLs approach the lesson or text with comparable NO levels of background knowledge that non-MLs already have. If non-MLs already approach the text with certain background knowledge, teachers should make sure MLs have the same information as a matter of equity. 2. Does the background provide different information from what the author provides in the text? The background information provided can't give away the text. (No NO spoilers!) Students must gather information from the text itself instead of learning it from background knowledge the teacher provides. MLs will still need support and scaffolding to gather information from the text itself. 3. Is the background knowledge about big issues that will help students make sense of the text? Teachers must focus instruction only on the background knowledge that NO is critical to MLs comprehending the lesson or text. MLs don't need to know everything possible related to the topic in order to access it. As part of the decision-making process, consider what background knowledge is critical to understanding and the topic and where there are opportunities to make connections to students' prior knowledge. Do not teach Teach background knowledge. background knowledge. Now that you've decided what background knowledge to teach, how will you teach it concisely? It is important to be concise when teaching background knowledge in order to maximize instructional time for addressing the content area standards. To do so, you could provide some background knowledge via a small group lesson or homework that students complete prior to class time. Then, students can briefly discuss the background during class.

Source: Adapted from Staehr Fenner, D. (2013b).