## Common knowledge – audio transcript

Common knowledge. Common knowledge is one of the factors of a discourse community. Basically, common knowledge is something that the people in the discourse community have together, and it's something that people outside their discourse community don't have. So, you might know things in an academic discipline. For example, biologists talking to each other could just refer to the structure of a cell and not have to explain what that structure is because all biologists share that common knowledge. A fifth grader, however, might not know how a cell is structured, let alone know the debates raging in the subfield of microbiology about the nuances of cell structures. That fifth grader is not part of the biology or microbiology discourse community. The fifth grader would not have to explain the terminology of Minecraft to his friends, but he would have to explain the terminology of Minecraft to those biologists. Different sets of common knowledge. However, if that fifth grader and one of the biologists both live in San Francisco, they would both know that California Street is a big hill. If a biologist from New York took a look at a map of San Francisco and saw California Street as a flat line on the map, she might think, hey, that would be an easy walk because she doesn't share the common knowledge of San Francisco that the other biologists in the fifth grader do. So that just shows how we're in overlapping discourse communities that have different sets of common knowledge.