



WHAT LANGUAGE DOES THIS TASK NEED?

Identify the language before you teach the task.



THE IDEA

Every task demands language – not just content knowledge.

EAL learners can't complete a task successfully if they don't have the language to do it.

Analysing the language load before you teach helps you plan better support, choose the right scaffolds and avoid unnecessary frustration.

It's a simple habit that makes your teaching more inclusive and effective for everyone.



IN THE CLASSROOM

Look at the task through a language lens.

Identify key vocabulary, phrases, grammar structures and text type.

Consider the cognitive demands (e.g. compare, justify, evaluate).

Plan how to make the language visible (glossaries, models, sentence frames).

Check that students have had a chance to learn and practise this language before attempting the task.

THE 3 STEPS

1



ANALYSE

Identify the language demands.

Read the task carefully.

Highlight key vocabulary, phrases and grammar.

Identify the text type and expected response.

Consider the thinking skills required

(e.g. describe, explain, compare, evaluate).

"What words will students need?"

"What language structures are required?"

"What makes this task linguistically challenging?"

2



PLAN

Make the language visible.

Pre-teach key vocabulary and phrases.

Use visuals, glossaries, models and examples.

Provide sentence frames or structured support.

Build in time to practise the language in context.

"Here are the key words ..."

"You can use this sentence frame ..."

"Let's practise saying/writing this together ..."

3



CHECK

Review and adjust.

Check that students have the language they need before starting the task.

Ask students to try a short version or discuss it first.

Adjust support if needed.

Reflect and refine for next time.

"Do students have the language to do this?"

"What support might they still need?"

"How can I make this clearer next time?"



WHY IT WORKS

- Reduces language-related barriers.
- Helps EAL learners access and demonstrate their knowledge.
- Leads to higher quality work and more confident participation.
- Supports clearer teaching and better learning for all students.



EAL UPGRADE

- Make language analysis part of your lesson planning.
- Use a simple checklist for each task.
- Build a bank of subject-specific language supports.
- Involve students in identifying useful language.
- Review and refine over time.



TRY IT TOMORROW

- Choose a task you are teaching this week.
- List the key vocabulary, phrases and language structures.
- Plan and prepare the language support (starters, glossaries, sentence frames).
- Use the task and see the difference.



TEACHER LANGUAGE

"Let's look at the language in this task."
"These are the key words you'll need."
"What kind of language is this?"
"Let's practise using these phrases."
"Does everyone have the language to start?"