

The 30-Second Rehearsal

Give every learner a brief chance to organise an explanation before addressing the class.

2 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Prepare one focused question and one optional sentence opening. Decide what a successful explanation must include.

Teach it in four steps

1. Ask one question and give quiet thinking time before anyone speaks.
2. Partners each rehearse for about 30 seconds. The listener identifies the main idea and asks one clarifying question.
3. The speaker improves one unclear phrase or missing link, then tries the explanation again.
4. Invite individual answers from different pairs and listen for the subject reasoning.

Science: balanced forces

First attempt: "It stays still because same." Improved: "The book stays at rest because the upward contact force balances its weight. The resultant force is zero."

Teacher: "Name the forces, then explain their relationship. You can begin: The object... because..."

Check understanding

Ask a different learner to explain a car moving at constant velocity. Look for zero resultant force, not the misconception that balanced forces always mean rest.

Fade the support

Keep rehearsal time but remove the sentence opening once learners can organise the explanation themselves.

Adapt it across subjects

Maths: explain why two differently written fractions are equivalent.

Humanities: rehearse one cause of an event, then add the mechanism that links cause and consequence.

Adjust the language support

A1-A2 access: keep the subject goal; use visuals, a small word bank, pointing or drawing and partner rehearsal. Use a home language to establish meaning where helpful.

B1-B2 extension: ask for fuller explanations, precise subject vocabulary and qualifications. Reduce sentence openings when learners can organise the response independently.

These are starting points, not placement rules. Judge support from the learner's response to this task; proficiency can differ across skills.