

Give Them the First Sentence

Give learners a route into writing while leaving the reasoning to them.

5 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Write a first sentence that establishes the topic and leaves the reasoning to the learner.

Teach it in four steps

1. Discuss what the question asks and what the opening should establish.
2. Provide one opening that contains no complete answer.
3. Learners add evidence and an explanation.
4. Compare endings and revise the opening if it no longer fits.

Worked classroom example

History: "One reason the protest gained support was..." Learners must name a reason and explain how the evidence supports it.

Teacher prompt: "Which detail supports your explanation? Show me how you know."

Check understanding

Can the learner continue with relevant evidence rather than a list of unrelated facts?

Fade the support

Offer two possible openings, then ask learners to compose their own.

Adapt it across subjects

Science: "The results show a relationship between..."

Maths: "These two methods give the same result because..."

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.