

Who Is Doing the Talking?

Make space for every learner to explain and reason.

5 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Observe who explains, asks and reasons during one existing classroom task.

Teach it in four steps

1. Choose a short interval and record who contributes.
2. Distinguish teacher explanation from learner reasoning.
3. Build a brief paired task that requires both learners to contribute.
4. Listen for the quality of the talk and collect an individual response.

Worked classroom example

Science: after a demonstration, both partners explain a different force arrow rather than one confident learner describing the whole diagram.

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

Check understanding

Can each learner explain independently after the pair task? Talk time alone is not evidence of understanding.

Fade the support

Remove assigned turns when learners share participation productively; retain them when needed.

Adapt it across subjects

Maths: one partner explains a step; the other questions its justification.

Humanities: each partner brings different source evidence.

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.