

What Language Does This Task Need?

Plan language support from the intended task outcome.

5 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Start with the task outcome and work backwards to the language learners will need.

Teach it in four steps

1. Identify what learners must produce or explain.
2. Predict the likely response structure and essential vocabulary.
3. Model one language choice in a subject example.
4. Check an independent response and adjust the support.

Worked classroom example

Science: comparing two materials needs precise properties and comparative language: "Copper conducts electricity, whereas plastic is an insulator."

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

Check understanding

Can learners choose an accurate comparison based on a new materials table?

Fade the support

Remove the comparative opening and let learners select their own wording.

Adapt it across subjects

Maths: predicting a graph needs trend and conditional language.

Humanities: evaluating a source needs judgement, evidence and qualification.

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.