

Gloss, Don't Simplify Everything

Place a brief gloss beside a blocking term while preserving the original sentence and its subject relationship.

5 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Keep the original text and choose only barriers that prevent the intended reading.

Teach it in four steps

1. Place a brief gloss beside a blocking term while preserving the original sentence and its subject relationship.
2. Annotate a small number of blocking terms or references.
3. Read the original sentence with the gloss beside it.
4. Answer using evidence from the original text, not only the annotation.

Worked example: Gloss, Don't Simplify Everything

Beside concentration, add “number of particles in a given volume” and point to the relevant diagram. Preserve the explanation of movement down a concentration gradient.

Teacher prompt: “Show the relationship and explain the choice you made.”

Check understanding

Remove one gloss in a fresh paragraph and check whether context now supports understanding.

Fade the support

Reduce annotations instead of rewriting the whole text.

Adapt it across subjects

Maths: gloss a contextual word while preserving the problem. Humanities: annotate a historical term without removing the source's wording.

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.