Fade the Scaffold

Remove one scaffold component and check a fresh response before deciding that support can fade.

5 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Select one learner response and one improvement that matters for its meaning.

Teach it in four steps

1. Remove one scaffold component and check a fresh response before deciding that support can fade.
2. Name one gap the learner can act on.
3. Show or discuss how to improve that gap.
4. Require a revised response and a fresh attempt to check transfer.

Worked example: Fade the Scaffold

Instead of “add detail”, write “Name the resultant force and connect it to acceleration.” The learner revises “It goes faster” into an explanation of the force relationship.

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

Check understanding

Check the new example, not only whether the original correction was copied.

Fade the support

Move from a full correction to a question, then to a learner-selected self-check.

Adapt it across subjects

Maths: identify the missing justification. Humanities: identify the unsupported claim or missing source link.

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.