

Multilingual ≠ Low Ability

Gather evidence of reasoning and prior knowledge without equating developing English with low intellectual ability.

10 min preparation | Staff planning and review

Before you begin

Gather recent reading, writing, listening and speaking evidence alongside learning history.

Use it in four steps

1. Gather evidence of reasoning and prior knowledge without equating developing English with low intellectual ability.
2. Compare evidence across subjects and response modes.
3. Identify a small number of teaching priorities instead of relying on one overall score.
4. Review fresh evidence after planned support and update the profile.

Worked example: Multilingual ≠ Low Ability

A learner may explain science orally yet struggle with an extended written evaluation. Plan a writing scaffold and collect a new response rather than treating the overall proficiency label as a full account.

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

Review the evidence

Does the next response show progress in the identified skill and task?

Review and refine

Reduce support when independent evidence is sustained across relevant tasks; review access needs separately.

Apply in your setting

Science: oral versus written explanations. Humanities: source reading versus discussion. Maths: word-problem reading versus calculation.

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.