

Build the Answer in Layers

Write a short answer in three passes: idea, evidence, then the link between them.

5 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Select a question and a small set of evidence relevant to it.

Teach it in four steps

1. Write a short answer in three passes: idea, evidence, then the link between them.
2. Arrange evidence so it supports that claim.
3. Write sentences that explain the link between evidence and claim.
4. Read as a paragraph and remove detail that does not serve the argument.

Worked example: Build the Answer in Layers

A paragraph about flood risk states a claim about building on floodplains, cites a source detail, then explains how the detail supports the claim. A list of weather facts is not the same structure.

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

Check understanding

Ask learners to identify the claim and explain what each supporting sentence contributes.

Fade the support

Move from paragraph headings to a blank plan, then independent organisation.

Adapt it across subjects

Science: result, evidence and mechanism. Maths: method choice, worked evidence and justification.

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.