Retrieve Before Revealing

Ask for a definition and example from memory, then reveal the class reference and refine it.

3 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Choose a small target from an earlier lesson and a new prompt for it.

Teach it in four steps

1. Ask for a definition and example from memory, then reveal the class reference and refine it.
2. Give individual thinking time so every learner attempts retrieval.
3. Reveal a reference and correct one gap with an explanation.
4. Return after a gap using a changed example or representation.

Worked example: Retrieve Before Revealing

Hide a force diagram. Learners sketch the two forces and recall what zero resultant means. A later diagram uses a moving object to test whether balanced forces are confused with being stationary.

Teacher prompt: “Try without looking first; then explain what you corrected.”

Check understanding

Check the later response without the original diagram or answer visible.

Fade the support

Remove hints gradually; keep the delayed check and corrective feedback.

Adapt it across subjects

Maths: recall a method and justify its first step. Humanities: retrieve a cause and its connection to the outcome.

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.