Ask for a Better Reason

After a learner gives an answer, invite a partner to ask what evidence would make the reason stronger.

5 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Choose a question, a plausible claim and several possible evidence items.

Teach it in four steps

1. After a learner gives an answer, invite a partner to ask what evidence would make the reason stronger.
2. Select evidence that answers this question, not merely an interesting detail.
3. Name the source, value or quotation precisely.
4. Explain how the selected evidence supports or challenges the claim.

Worked example: Ask for a Better Reason

Claim: the liquid warmed. Evidence: the reading increased from 20 °C to 28 °C. Link: the later reading is 8 °C higher. The colour of the beaker does not support this claim.

Teacher prompt: “Which detail supports this claim, and how?”

Check understanding

Offer a second claim and ask which evidence belongs with it and why.

Fade the support

Remove the evidence shortlist; learners locate their own relevant item.

Adapt it across subjects

Maths: cite a worked value or counterexample. Humanities: identify a source detail and explain its relevance.

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.