

Choose the Language for Planning

Let learners plan a complex answer in the language that supports their thinking, then draft the required English response.

5 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Choose a clear purpose for home-language use and an explicit return to the shared task.

Teach it in four steps

1. Let learners plan a complex answer in the language that supports their thinking, then draft the required English response.
2. Allow purposeful discussion, reading or notes in a useful language.
3. Collect the English terms or sentence needed for the shared output.
4. Check the concept again through the final response, not translation alone.

Worked example: Choose the Language for Planning

Let learners choose a useful language for planning a demanding explanation. Agree the final shared output and the English terms they will need to bridge into it.

Teacher prompt: "Which language helps you think, and what will you bring into the shared response?"

Check understanding

Ask for an independent explanation or diagram after the language bridge.

Fade the support

Reduce the supplied English bridge as learners can select the terms themselves.

Adapt it across subjects

Maths: plan a method in a familiar language, then justify with notation and key English terms.
Humanities: research in another language, then attribute evidence in the shared response.

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.