

# THE 'FIVE-A-DAY' PRINCIPLE

## Scaffolding



### What is it?



Scaffolding is one of the five evidence-based approaches—a 'Five-a-day'—that the EEF's guidance report, *Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools*, recommends to support pupils with SEND to make good academic progress.

Consider how you can provide scaffolds in a way that reduces stigma, promotes independence and reduces over time.

“Scaffolding is a metaphor for temporary support that is removed when no longer required. It may be visual, verbal or written.”

**SEN in Mainstream guidance report, EEF, 2020**

### What can it look like in practice?

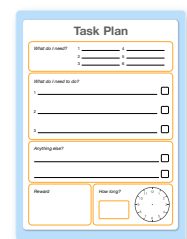
For example:

#### Visual



Visual scaffolds may support a pupil to know what equipment they need, the steps they need to take or what their work should look like.

- A task planner
- A list of the steps a pupil needs to take
- Model examples of work
- Images that support vocabulary learning



#### Verbal



Providing a verbal scaffold may involve reteaching a tricky concept to a group of pupils, or using questioning to identify and address any misconceptions.

- “Let’s look at this together...”
- “What have you done before, that will help you with this task?”
- “Don’t forget, your work needs to include...”

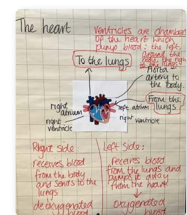


#### Written



A written scaffold will typically be provided for a pupil to support them with an independent written task. It could be the notes made on the whiteboard during class discussion; it could even be the child's own previous work used to support their recall.

- A word bank
- A writing frame
- Sentence starters



### What does the evidence say?

#### HLP15—Provide scaffolded supports:

Scaffolded supports provide temporary assistance to students so they can successfully complete tasks that they cannot yet do independently and with a high rate of success. Teachers select powerful visual, verbal and written supports; carefully calibrate them to students' performance and understanding in relation to learning tasks; use them flexibly; evaluate their effectiveness; and gradually remove them once they are no longer needed. Some supports are planned prior to lessons and some are provided responsively during instruction.

Figure 67 McLeskey et al. (2017)—high-leverage practice 15 SEN in Mainstream Schools Evidence Review, EEF, 2020 [eef.li/D4821h](https://eef.li/D4821h)

### How strong is the evidence?

A systematic review of 56 studies (Belland et al., 2017) found that 'scaffolding has a consistently strong effect across student populations', noting a 'very large' effect size among students with learning disabilities.

“In your classrooms, respond to need—what is the pupil's barrier, what will scaffold that barrier and how will you adjust the strategy if you need to? Consider how long you need to do this for, and how intensely you need to do it.”

**Kelly Ashford, Deputy Headteacher,  
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