

ELTA Online Training

May 6, 2026 (Wednesday)
2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

How scaffolding supports differentiation.

Scaffolding helps differentiation by **providing appropriate support** depending on a student's readiness.

In a Low-Level English Classroom...

Students Have **Different Abilities**



Different Abilities

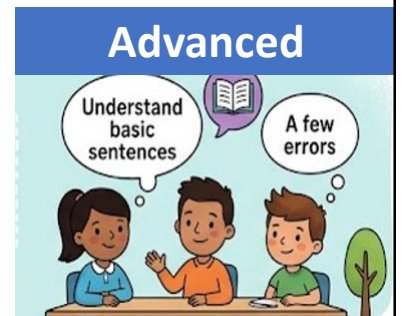
Novice



Intermediate



Advanced



Differentiation & Scaffolding

— Support for Every Student —



Extra Help

More Support

Guided Practice

Step-by-Step

Independent Work

On Their Own

Defining
Scaffolding & Differentiation



SCAFFOLDING

Temporary support that helps students build independence in learning

I like ____ because _

Sentence Frames

Fill-in-the-Blanks

DIFFERENTIATION OF INSTRUCTION

Adjusting teaching based on individual student needs

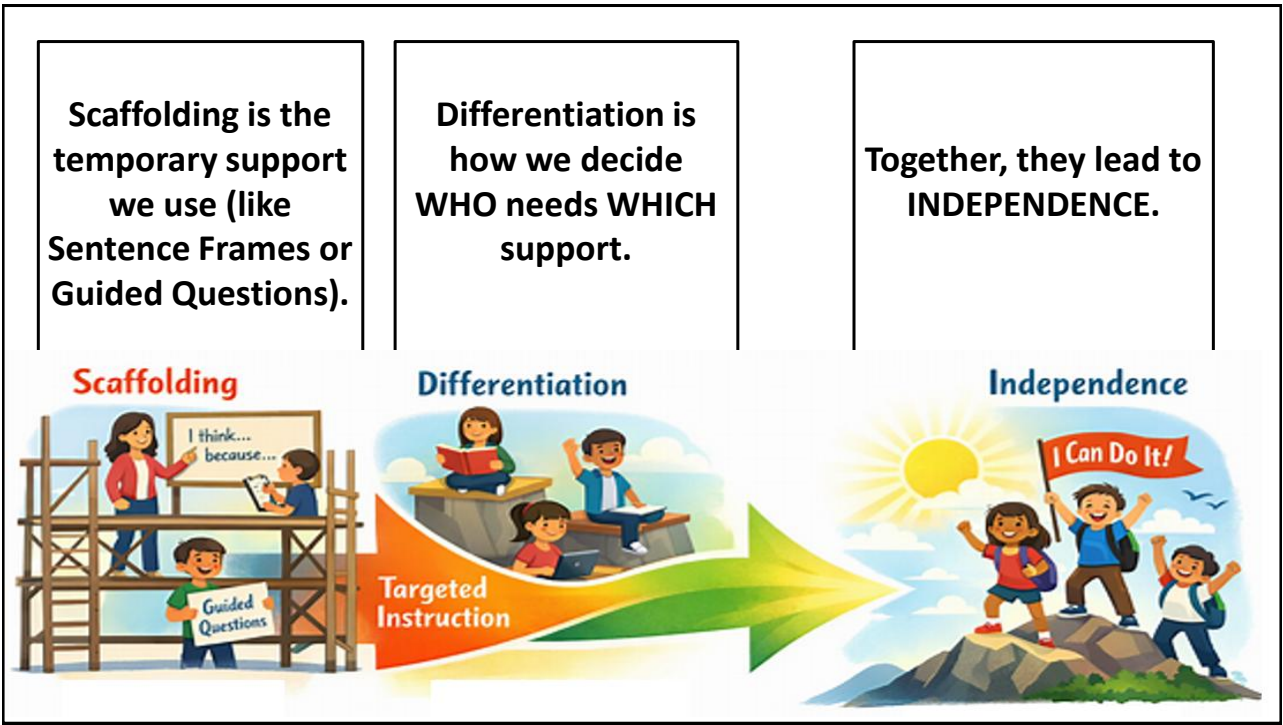
Watch me model it first.

Let's try it together.

The cat is black.

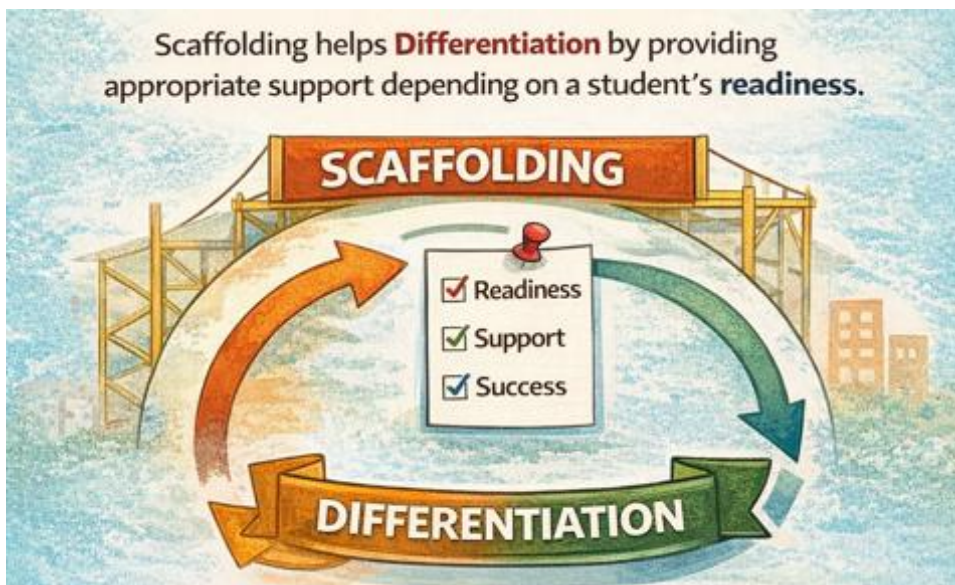
Guided Questions

Step-by-Step Prompts



The Connection Between **Scaffolding** & **Differentiation**

Scaffolding helps **Differentiation** by providing appropriate support depending on a student's **readiness**.



Here's how the sentence:

“I eat breakfast”

can be scaffolded to support students with **different English competency levels** within the same classroom.

I eat breakfast.

● **Novice Learners (High Scaffolding)**

Support Tools: Sentence Frame + Visual Aid + Word Bank

Sentence Frame:

“I eat ___ for breakfast.”

Visual Aid



Word Bank

bread, egg,
tea, rice,
milk, noodles

Student Example: “I eat rice for breakfast.”

Helps students focus on choosing a word, not building full sentences from scratch.

I eat breakfast.

● **Intermediate Learners (Medium Scaffolding)**

Support Tools: Prompt Question + Word Bank

Prompt

**“What do you eat for
breakfast?”**

Word Bank

**eggs, banana, bread,
noodles, rice**

Student Example: “I eat eggs and noodles for breakfast.”

Supports vocabulary recall while encouraging sentence creation with less structure.

I eat breakfast.

● **Advanced Learners (Low Scaffolding)**

Support Tools: Open-Ended Prompt

Prompt

“Tell me about your breakfast routine.”

Student Example: “I usually eat noodles with eggs and drink a glass of water.”

Encourages fluency, detail, and independence in sentence construction.

Key Takeaway

- For **Novice Learners**, provide a **structured sentence frame** and visuals to reduce cognitive load.
- For **Intermediate Learners**, remove the frame but keep a **word bank** to guide vocabulary choices.
- For **Advanced Learners**, use an **open-ended prompt** to promote autonomy and expression.

Key Takeaway

Differentiated instruction and scaffolding makes sure all students are working on the *same topic* but with *the right level of support*.

**Scaffolding is NOT a
One-size-fits-all strategy.**

- It must be **adjusted based** on individual student readiness level.
- The goal: To **reduce support gradually, until students can work independently.**

**Breakout Group
Exercises & Instructions**

1. Add Scaffolds to a Basic Task

Purpose: Understand how scaffolds make tasks easier for novice learners.

Task:

Groups receive this activity:

“Students write 3 sentences about their favourite animal.”

Group Task:

Add **three scaffolds** to support novice learners.

Scaffold options:

- Sentence starters: “My favorite animal is...”, “It is...”, “It can...”
- Word bank: *cat, dog, bird, big, small, fast*
- Example sentence
- Gap-fill: “My favorite animal is _____.”

Sentence Starters for ELTAS:

- “One scaffold we added is _____.”
- “This helps novice learners because _____.”

Report Back (1 minute):

- Share **three scaffolds** you added.
- Explain **how one scaffold helps** novice learners.

2. Rewrite Instructions Using Scaffolding

Purpose: Practice giving clear, scaffolded instructions.

Task:

Rewrite this instruction:

“Describe the picture.”

Group Task:

Rewrite it using **at least two scaffolds**.

Helpful scaffolds for ELTAS:

- Sentence starters: “He is...”, “She is...”
- Word bank: *running, sitting, reading, smiling*
- Example: “He is running.”
- Gap-fill: “He is _____.”

Report Back (1 minute):

- Read your **new instruction**.
- Name the **two scaffolds** you used.

3. Spot the Missing Scaffold

Purpose: Identify when a task is too difficult and needs scaffolding.

Task:

Groups read this activity:

“Students read the paragraph and answer 5 questions.”

Group Task:

1. Identify **one difficulty** for novice learners.
2. Add **two scaffolds** to make it easier.

Sentence Starters for ELTAS:

- “This is difficult because _____.”
- “A scaffold we can add is _____.”

Report Back (1 minute):

- Say **one difficulty**.
- Share the **two scaffolds** you added.

4. Tier the Task (Easy, Medium, Challenge)

Purpose: Show how to create different levels of support for mixed-ability learners.

Task:

Groups do this activity:

“Students write about your weekend.”

Group Task:

Create **three levels**:

- **Easy:** with scaffolds
- **Medium:** some scaffolds
- **Challenge:** extra question or no scaffolds

Example supports for ELTAS:

- Easy: “On Saturday I _____. On Sunday I _____.”
- Medium: Word bank
- Challenge: “Write 5 sentences that include one feeling in each one.”

Report Back (1 minute):

- Share your **three levels**.
- Explain how each level helps **different learners**.

5. Match Learners to Differentiated Supports

Purpose: Understand how different learners need different types of support.

Task:

Match each learner type with the best support.

Learners:

1. Novice learner
2. Intermediate-level learner
3. Advanced-level learner

Supports:

- A. Sentence starters
- B. Word bank + example
- C. Extra challenge question

Sentence Starters for ELTAs:

- “We matched ___ with ___ because _____.”

Report Back (1 minute):

- Share your **three matches**.
- Give **one reason** for each match.

6. (Easier Version): Choose the appropriate Supports for Two Learner Levels

Purpose: Understand that differentiation can be *very simple* — just by giving different levels of support.

Task:

Groups look at this activity:

“Students name 3 things in the classroom.”

Group Task:

Create **two versions** of this activity:

1. **One version for novice learners**
2. **One version for advanced-level learners**

Use the support options below to help you:

Support Options (choose any):

- Word bank
- Picture of a classroom
- Sentence starters
- Gap-fill
- Extra challenge question
- Ask for more items

Sentence Starters for ELTAs:

- “For lower-level learners, we used _____.”
- “This helps because _____.”
- “For higher-level learners, we used _____.”
- “This helps because _____.”

Report Back (1 minute):

- Share your **lower-level version**.
- Share your **higher-level version**.
- Say **one reason** why the versions are different.

Model Answers

Activity 1 — Add Scaffolds to a Basic Task

Task: Add scaffolds to: “Students write 3 sentences about their favourite animal.”

Model Answer

Three scaffolds we added:

1. Sentence starters:

- “My favourite animal is...”
- “It is...”
- “It can...”

2. Word bank:

cat, dog, bird, big, small, fast

3. Example sentence:

- “My favourite animal is a dog.”

Why this helps:

- “Sentence starters help low-level learners because they don’t need to think of the whole sentence alone.”

Activity 2 — Rewrite Instructions Using Scaffolding

Task: Rewrite: “Describe the picture.”

Model Answer

New instruction with scaffolds:

- “Look at the picture.”
- “Use these sentence starters: *He is... / She is...*”
- “Use these words: *running, sitting, reading, smiling.*”
- “Example: *She is reading.*”
- “Write 2 sentences.”

Scaffolds used:

- Sentence starters
- Word bank
- Example sentence

Activity 3 — Spot the Missing Scaffold

Task: Improve: “Students read the paragraph and answer 5 questions.”

Model Answer

Difficulty:

- “This is difficult because low-level learners cannot read long text easily.”

Two scaffolds added:

- 1. Picture support** for the topic
- 2. Glossary / word meanings** for difficult words
 - *happy = feeling good*
 - *weekend = Saturday and Sunday*

Why this helps:

- “Pictures help students understand the topic.”
- “Word meanings help students understand the text.”

Activity 4 — Tier the Task (Easy, Medium, Challenge)

Task: Differentiate: “Students write about their weekend.”

Model Answer

Easy Level (with scaffolds):

- Gap-fill:
 - “On Saturday I _____.”
 - “On Sunday I _____.”
- Word bank: *played, slept, cooked, watched TV*

Medium Level (some scaffolds):

- “Write 3 sentences about your weekend.”
- Word bank only

Challenge Level (no scaffolds + extra task):

- “Write 5 sentences about your weekend.”
- “Include one feeling word (happy, tired, excited).”

How this helps:

- “Easy level helps low-level learners because they only fill in words.”
- “Medium level gives some support.”
- “Challenge level gives more work for strong learners.”

Activity 5 — Match Learners to Differentiated Supports

Learners:

1. Very low-level learner
2. Medium-level learner
3. High-level learner

Supports:

- A. Sentence starters
- B. Word bank + example
- C. Extra challenge question

Model Answer

- **1 → A** (Very low-level → Sentence starters)
 - “This helps because they only need to finish the sentence.”
- **2 → B** (Medium-level → Word bank + example)
 - “This helps because they can write alone but still need ideas.”
- **3 → C** (High-level → Extra challenge question)
 - “This helps because they can do more and think deeper.”

Activity 6 Choose Supports for Two Learner Levels

Lower-level version:

- Show a **picture of a classroom**.
- Give a **word bank**: *desk, chair, board, window*.
- Use a **gap-fill**:
 - “I see a _____.”
 - “I see a _____.”
 - “I see a _____.”

Why this helps:

- “Lower-level learners get help with words and pictures.”

Higher-level version:

- “Name **5 things** in the classroom.”
- “Add **one adjective** (big, small, brown).”

Why this helps:

- “Higher-level learners can do more and use extra words.”