

Testing, testing

About this activity

'Testing, testing' is an activity which you can use to close gaps in learning. Do it with learners before giving them their test results, so they can try again and learn from each other. You also have more time to give individual learners support.

Stage 1: Preparation	Mark learners' tests. Make a list of the most frequent mistakes. Decide how to share the questions with learners, e.g. on the board or paper copies; all at once or one at a time.
Stage 2: Introduction	At the start of the lesson, say: 'Before I give you your tests and marks, we will look again at the difficult questions.' Say: 'This time when you answer the questions you can look at your books, discuss the answers and ask me for help if necessary.'
Stage 3: Group work	Put learners in small groups. Mixed-level groups are best so that learners can learn from each other. Show / give each group the first question / all the questions. If you are giving questions one at a time, give a time limit so there is time to discuss all the questions. Circulate, monitor and support. If no groups can answer, discuss the question together as a class. However, if some groups can answer, ask them to help other groups.
Stage 4: Whole class feedback	Start with the first question. Choose one group to answer. Tell other groups to listen. Do not repeat the answer! If learners can't hear or don't understand, use gestures (e.g. pointing) to encourage them to say, e.g. 'Can you repeat please?' or 'Can you explain?' Repeat with the other questions. Choose a different group to answer each time. Make sure all learners have the correct answers and understand why they are correct before returning their tests to them.

Stage 5: Individual work	Return the tests to your learners. Say: “Look at other questions you got wrong. Look at your books, talk to your classmates. Find the right answers.” Circulate, monitor and support individual learners.
Stage 6: Closing activity	Say: 'Now think about what you learned today from your test. Close your eyes and think of 2 or 3 things.' Give them 1 minute. Say: 'Open your eyes and tell a partner what you learned.' Give them 3 minutes.

You may think you don't have time to do this activity because there is so much to cover in the curriculum. However, it's very important to make sure you close the gaps on past learning before you move on to new topics.

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