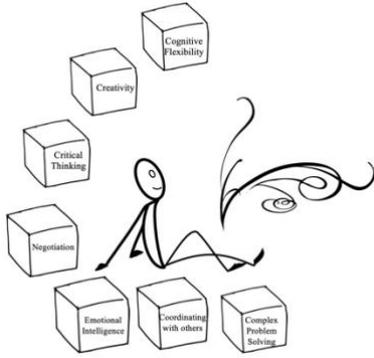


# Scaffolding Instructions (Pre-School)

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Among all the different skills we present in our lessons, one of the most essential— understanding instructions – is mostly forgotten. And it’s essential. In pre-school, the students rely more on images than words – and that’s developmentally appropriate. Nevertheless, if we could begin at this age to help our students to understand the dynamics of instructions, we’ve done them a great service. We can set up activities so that they interact with images, and we verbalise the academic language that they’ll read and hear in their later studies. In this way, they will have already assimilated many of the peculiarities found in the wording of instructions, and that will give them a level of comfort that will help them in the long term.

The language used in written instructions – but also the language we use verbally when we are explaining an evaluation or assessment – is almost always very different from the words, phrases, terms and the structure of the sentences we use in day-to-day situations.

This scaffolding activity not only presents more sophisticated language that Pre-Schoolers will need to know in the future, but it is also a perfect way of creating inclusion in your classes; those students who need to move to be able to assimilate information, to speak, to use interpersonal skills, to touch and manipulate information, who need more visual clues, will enjoy this learning strategy. The scaffold promotes collaboration, critical thinking, and inferencing, many other essential 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. You'll see how easy the scaffold is to adapt to your needs.

*\* Academic success 'is intricately linked to higher-order thinking processes developed by extensive modeling and scaffolding of classroom talk and accelerated by weaving direct teaching of its features while teaching content concepts.' (Zwiers, 2008).*

*Step by Step:*

1. Give your students a set of clipart that represents the instructions that they'll have in their classwork and assessments. (Examples below and downloaded [here](#).)
2. In full sentences, use each of the words.

Example: Jose is tracing a box.  
Suzanna drawing the sun.  
Sandra is cutting a forest.

3. Students negotiate with their partners, choose the appropriate clipart and hold it over their heads.
4. They look at what their classmates have chosen. They can say, 'We have chosen the same drawing as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of Jose tracing a box.' This helps the repeat and use the instructional vocabulary and also recognize their classmates, thus practicing social and cognitive skills.
5. Continue until you've mentioned all the words
6. You can extend the activity by giving pairs of students turns at leading the activity.



*video explanation of scaffold...*



*transcript of video explanation of scaffold...*

Hi, I'm Donna Fields and welcome to CLIL Scaffolding 15. It's a series of webinars designed to help give you support for using scaffolding in your lessons. Today we're going to use scaffolding technique #157.

One hundred and one more of these technique can be found in my book: [101 Scaffolding Techniques for Language Teaching and Learning](#) that has also been translated into Spanish.

More times than we may realise, our students' assessments are affected by their ability to read the instructions. No matter how much they may have studied, they are often thwarted by the unfamiliar language and structure used in exams. Here are examples of this phenomenon: 'I knew I was going to fail when I didn't even understand the instructions to the exam questions.'

The language we use every day in the classroom is more often than not very different from the written language we use or what is found in instructions given on exams, in lab reports, on assignments and so on.

We need to help our students become familiar with this language. So how do we help them?

It's easy.

Let's take an example from a Secondary History exam. This is what students might see before they even begin reading the actual question on the exam.

Let's take the instructions, enlarge them so that there is part of sentence on each line, cut them up, divide the slips of paper between pairs or groups of students, put the first one on the board to help start them off, and then all the students have to read their slips and figure out which comes next. Each time they put one on the board, they read what's already been put up before. By the time they've finished putting up all the instructions, they've read them many times. You can question them on certain words to make sure they've understood everything.

You use this same dynamic for any Primary exam. Again, it may seem simple to you, but these instructions take time for students whether their home language is different than the classroom language or not.

And that's it! Another simple scaffolding technique that I hope you can use in your classes. And you've helped your students to focus on important words and structures so that they are more comfortable taking an exam.

So all you SUPER TEACHERS out there, I look forward to seeing you next time and have fun in your classes! Bye!

You can find me at:

<https://scaffoldingmagic.com/>