

Scaffolding

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What is scaffolding?

It is a teaching technique in which the teacher provides successive levels of temporary support. This helps students progressively reach higher levels of comprehension. The supportive strategies are removed once they are no longer needed.

Scaffolding uses “modelling, prompting and providing hinting help to transfer responsibility to the learner so that they can use them independently when an adult is not present” (Radford, Bosanquet, Webster, & Blatchford, 2015)

Important Note

This type of learning support is temporary and only used when extra assistance is needed.

Research supporting scaffolding:

- One study found that “recent systematic reviews of comprehension intervention studies for students with learning disabilities found consistent sizeable improvements from comprehension intervention that consisted largely of teaching reading strategies [i.e.: scaffolding]” (Ukrainetz, n.d).
- These cases indicate the potential for cognitive scaffolding to help students actively improve their own executive functioning in complex tasks (Rosen et al, 2014).

Effective for the Following Populations:

- Students with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities (Radford et al, 2015)
- Mild disabilities (Rosen, Boyle, Cariss, & Forchelli, 2014)
- Learning disabilities (Rosen et al, 2014)
- ADHD (Rosen et al, 2014)
- School-aged children and older (6 years or older)

How to Use Scaffolding:



- Step 1: Assess Need
 - Does the child need extra assistance to learn the skill? If yes, move to “Step 2.” If no, scaffolding is not needed.
- Step 2: Lay the Foundation
 - Model the new strategy with example problems
- Step 3: Prompt and Hint
 - Prompt or provide hints that will help the child solve the problem without giving away the answer
- Step 4: Praise and Encourage Child
 - Praise child for doing the skill correctly and encourage the child to try the problem without help
- Step 5: Gradually Remove Support
 - Slowly help child with fewer steps until he or she no longer needs support
- Step 6: Observe Child Using Newly Acquired Skill without Assistance

References

- Radford, J. j., Bosanquet, P., Webster, R., & Blatchford, P. (2015). Scaffolding learning for independence: Clarifying teacher and teaching assistant roles for children with special educational needs. *Learning & Instruction*, 361-10. doi:10.1016/j.learninstruc.2014.10.005.
- Rosen, S. s., Boyle, J. R., Cariss, K., & Forchelli, G. A. (2014). Changing How We Think, Changing How We Learn: Scaffolding Executive Function Processes for Students With Learning Disabilities. *Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 20(4), 165-176.
- Ukrainetz, T. (n.d). Improving Text Comprehension: Scaffolding Adolescents into Strategic Reading. *Seminars In Speech And Language*, 36(1), 17-30.