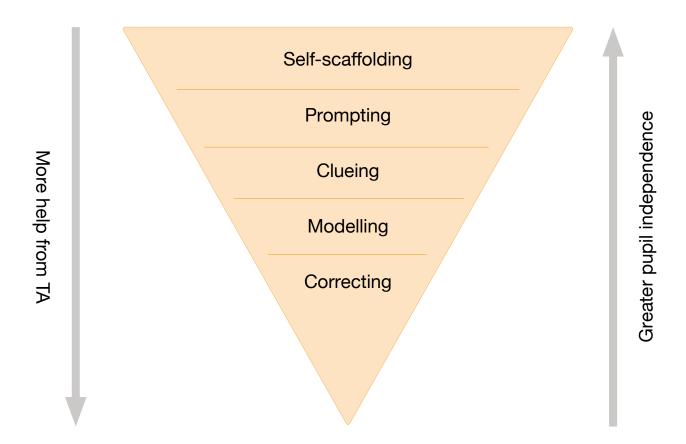# MAKING BEST USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS
Scaffolding framework for teaching assistant-pupil interactions

This practical framework is designed to help TAs scaffold pupils' learning and encourage independent learning. TAs should move down the layers in turn.

The initial expectation is that pupils self-scaffold whilst

the TA observes their performance. TAs should then intervene appropriately when pupils demonstrate they are unable to proceed. It is important the tasks set by teachers, and supported by TAs, provide pupils with the right level of challenge.

More help from TA →

Self-scaffolding
Prompting
Clueing
Modelling
Correcting

Greater pupil independence →

Self-scaffolding
Self-scaffolding represents the highest level of pupil independence. TAs observe, giving pupils time for processing and thinking. Self-scaffolders can: plan how to approach a task; problem- solve as they go; and review how they approached a task.

Prompting
TAs provide prompts when pupils are unable to self-scaffold. Prompts encourage pupils to draw on their own knowledge, but refrain from specifying a strategy. The aim is to nudge pupils into deploying a self-scaffolding technique. For example: 'What do you need to do first?'; 'What's your plan?'; 'You can do this!'

Clueing
Often pupils know the strategies or knowledge required to solve a problem, but find it difficult to call them mind. Clues worded as questions provide a hint in the right direction. The answer must contain a key piece of information to help pupils work out how to move forward. Always start with a small clue.

Modelling
Prompts and clues can be ineffective when pupils encounter a task that requires a new skill or strategy. TAs, as confident and competent experts, can model while pupils actively watch and listen. Pupils should try the same step for themselves immediately afterwards.

Correcting
Correcting involves providing answers and requires no independent thinking. Occasionally it is appropriate to do this, however, TAs should always aim instead to model and encourage pupils to apply new skills or knowledge first.

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