EEI1304

English Classroom Management

Chapter 4

Checking Students' Understanding

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Checking Students' Understanding

Why is CFU so beneficial?

1. It allows the teacher to make instructional decisions during the lesson. It informs the teacher when to **speed up, slow down, or re-teach**. CFU helps pace the lesson.
2. When teachers look at independent work, homework, quizzes, or state test results to see if students learned…it's **too late** to modify instruction.

(Dataworks Educational Research, 2025)

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Checking Students' Understanding

What?

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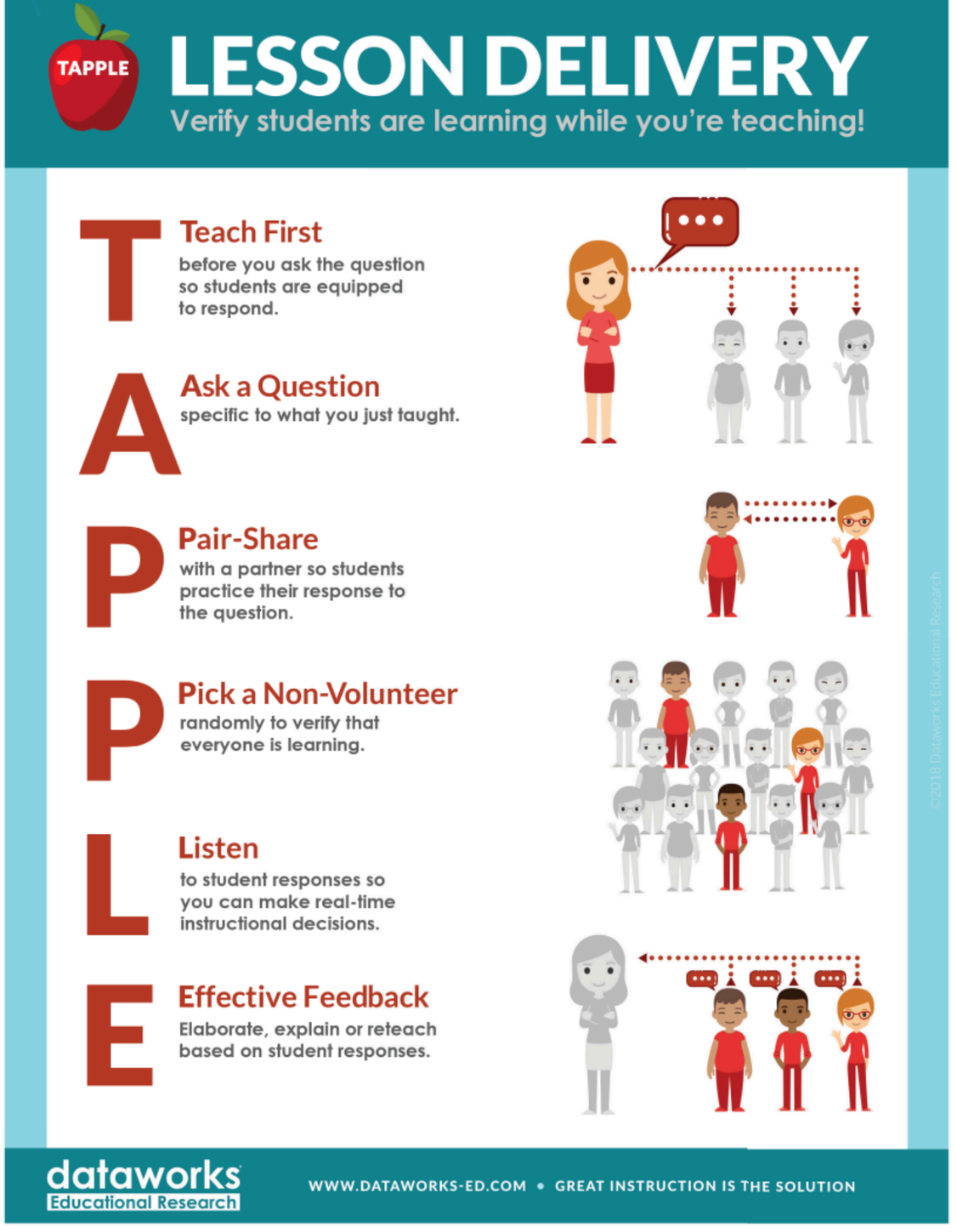

TAPPLE: Teach First

verify/test

before/after

first/last

When Checking for Understanding, you always **teach first.** Remember, the purpose of CFU is to _ _ _ _ _ _ that your students are learning what you are teaching **while you are teaching.** By teaching _ _ _ _ _ _ you ask a question, the students are equipped to respond. You have to present the content _ _ _ _ _ , then your students should be able to answer the Checking for Understanding correctly.

(Dataworks Educational Research, 2025)

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TAPPLE: Ask a Question.

specific

understand

match

During Checking for Understanding, always ask _ _ _ _ _ _ _ questions about what you are teaching. Don't ask students if they _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ the content. Often, students' opinions of their learning do not _ _ _ _ _ reality.

(Dataworks Educational Research, 2025)

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TAPPLE: Pause and Pair-Share

pause

opportunity

tune

pair-share

When you ask a CFU question, always ask the question first, then _ _ _ _ _ for several seconds before selecting a student to respond. The pause, also known as **wait time** or **think time**, provides an _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to all students to think of an answer even if they aren't called upon. If you call on a student prior to asking the question, the other students are free to _ _ _ _ out. By presenting the question to the whole class, everyone stays engaged because no one knows who will be selected to give a response. If you also have the students discuss the question and answer in a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ then student engagement increases. It gives students a chance to practice and correct their answers.

(Dataworks Educational Research, 2025)

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TAPPLE: Pick a Non-Volunteer

out

select

on

impression

The only way you can truly find _ _ _ if students are learning the information you're teaching is to randomly _ _ _ _ _ _ three non-volunteers to answer your CFU questions. When you call _ _ volunteers, you are being validated by your brightest learners and could be getting a false _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ that every student is learning.

(Dataworks Educational Research, 2025)

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TAPPLE: Listen to the Response.

determine

determination

correct

responds

Listening carefully, you will need to _ _ _ _ _ _ _ the level of student understanding. Based on this _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , you will be making an instructional decision. Ideally, students will always have the _ _ _ _ _ _ _answer to your CFU questions, but sometimes they won't. What you do next depends on what you hear when the student _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _. Is it correct, partially correct, or just plain wrong?

(Dataworks Educational Research, 2025)

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TAPPLE: Effective Feedback

- echo
- affirmation
- elaborate
- explain

Based on the accuracy of the student's response, you can do one of three things: **echo, elaborate, or explain**. If the student is correct, you _ _ _ _ the correct response back. Restating the correct answer provides an _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to the student who just answered. When the response is tentative or partially correct, you should _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ . Elaborating and/or paraphrasing will reinforce the correct answer to the student who was called on and will also benefit the rest of the class. Finally, if two students in a row cannot answer, then you will need to _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , or reteach.

(Dataworks Educational Research, 2025)

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Techniques for Checking Understanding in EFL Classroom

1. Using synonyms and antonyms
2. Giving definitions
3. Timeline
4. Concept questions
5. Asking for personal responses
6. Using pictures or realia
7. Mime
8. Discriminationg between different forms
9. Translation

(Taylor, 2025)

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Giving Definitions or Examples

Target Word: Software

Teacher asks:
What's are some examples of software?

(Taylor, 2025)

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Using Synonyms or Antonyms

Target Word: Hot

Teacher asks:

What's the opposite of hot?

(Taylor, 2025)

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Matching Definition

Target Word: shocked, disappointed and worried

Teacher introduces a matching game:

1. shocked	A. Unhappy because something you wanted to happen didn’t happen or wasn’t very good.
2. disappointed	B. Thinking about bad things that may happen and feeling unhappy and afraid.
3. worried	C. Very surprised about something bad.

(Gorman & Norris, 2019)

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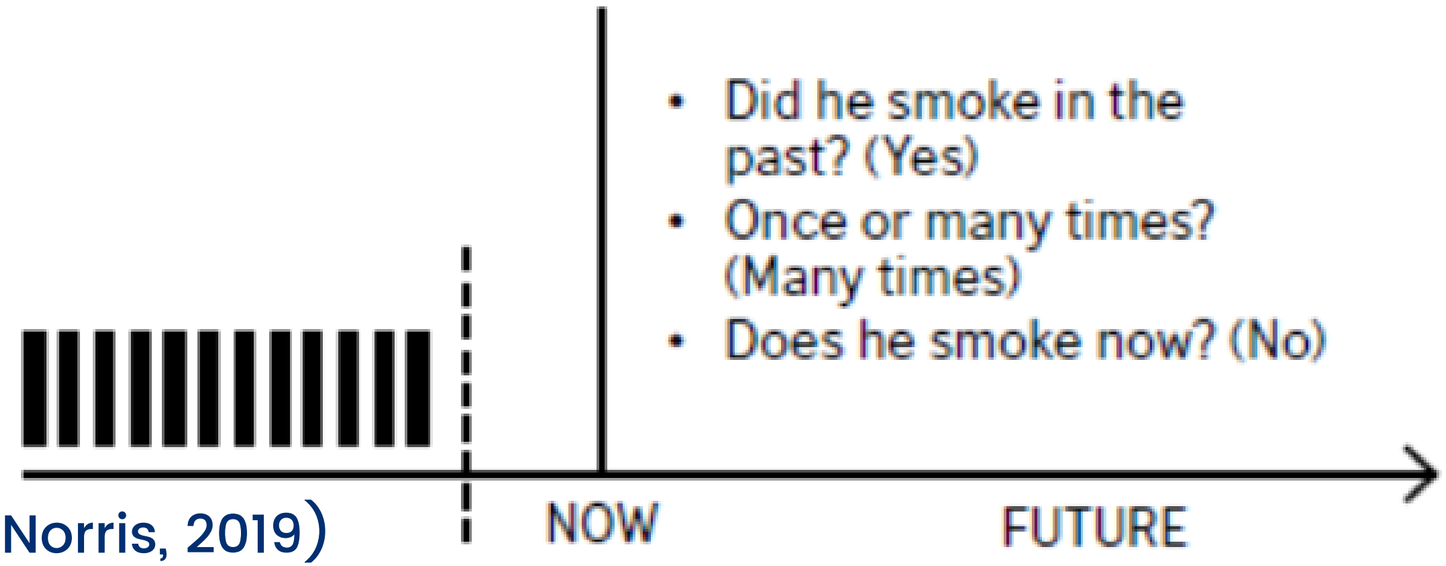
Timeline

Target Sentence: He used to smoke.

Have students (in pairs, small groups, or at the whiteboard) mark the verb forms on a timeline



(Gorman & Norris, 2019)

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Concept Questions

Target Word: I'll get a book from the library.

Teacher asks a set of questions:

Checking questions	Possible answers
What can you find in a library?	Books.
Do you buy the books?	No.
Can you keep the books?	No, borrow them.

(Gorman & Norris, 2019)

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Asking a personal responses

Target Word: Bear

Teacher asks a set of questions:

- What would you do if you saw a bear?

(Taylor, 2025)

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Using Pictures

Target sentence: People are enjoying a pizza.

Teacher shows 2-3 pictures and ask: Which picture shows the people enjoying a pizza?

1

2

3

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Using Realia (Real Objects)

Target word: Shoes

Teacher says show me your shoes

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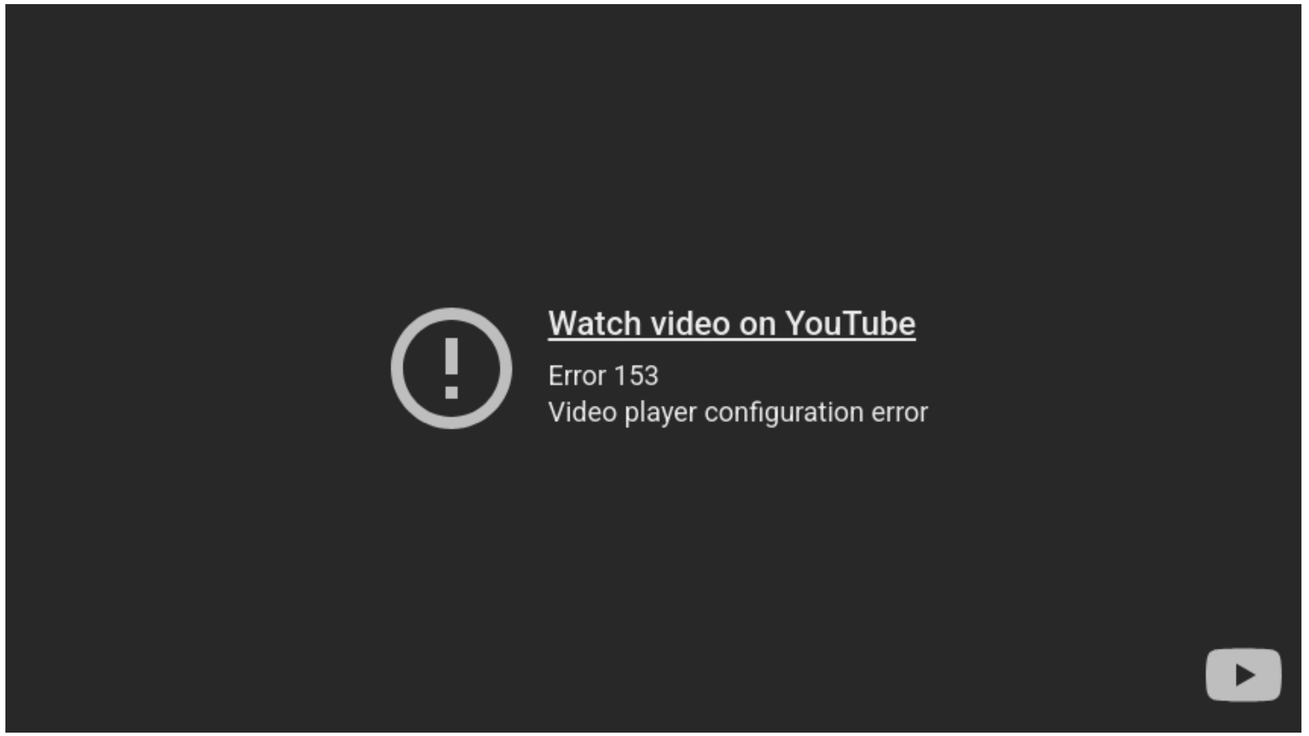
Mime and Gesture (Using Actions)

Target word: Banana

Teacher asks students to mime: What am I eating?



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Discriminating btw dif forms

Target tense: simple past vs continuous past

Teacher says:

I ate my dinner when you arrived.

I was eating my dinner when you arrived.

Teacher asks:

What's the difference?

Students could answer with timeline.

(Taylor, 2025)

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Using Translation

Target word: Disappointed

Teacher asks:

How do we say disappointed in Thai?

Note:

- avoid interrupting the flow of the activity
- a monolingual class

(Gorman & Norris, 2019)

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