

# Elicit, *don't* tell.

Pulling language out of students instead of giving it to them.

## WHY ELICIT?

Every word you give them is a word they don't practise. Every word you pull out of them is a word they own. Eliciting is slow at first but pays back tenfold in retention.

## ELICIT VOCABULARY

- **Visual.** Show a picture — let them name it. (Pictures > definitions every time.)
- **Definition.** "It's a person who works in a hospital, treats patients..."
- **Synonyms.** "What's another word for 'happy' — stronger?"
- **Antonyms.** "What's the opposite of 'expensive'?"
- **Gap fill.** "I'm really... I haven't eaten all day."
- **Mime / gesture.** Act it out. Cheap, fast, memorable.
- **First letter.** Write the first letter. Wait.
- **Number of syllables.** "It's three syllables. Starts with 'pho-'."

## ELICIT GRAMMAR

- **Concept questions.** Test if they UNDERSTAND, not if they can RECITE. "Is this past or future?"
- **Timeline drawing.** Draw a line. Mark NOW. Ask: "Where does this verb belong?"
- **Negative model.** Say a wrong sentence. "Is this right?" Let them fix it.
- **Two versions.** Write two sentences. "Which one is more polite? Why?"
- **Function before form.** "How do you ask politely?" Then teach the structure.

## ELICIT IDEAS & OPINIONS

- "What do you think happens next?" *before showing the answer*
- "Why do you think that is?" *deepens any statement*
- "Has anyone experienced something like this?" *connects to real life*
- "What would you do in this situation?" *creates investment*
- "Anyone disagree with what was just said?" *creates conversation*
- "What's the strongest argument FOR?" *forces both sides*
- "If you had to choose one — which?" *forces commitment*
- "How would you say this in your country?" *uses their context*

## THINGS TO STOP DOING

- **Answering your own question.** You ask, wait two seconds, then answer. Wait FIVE. They'll fill the gap.
- **Speaking when they should.** Translating, defining, summarising what they just said. Let them struggle a beat.
- **Asking yes/no questions.** "Do you like coffee?" → "Yes." Dead end. Ask "What kind?" instead.
- **Using "why" too early.** It can feel like an attack. Try "What made you think that?"
- **Rephrasing your question.** If they didn't get it, the SECOND wording often confuses more. Just wait.

## WAIT TIME — THE SECRET

### RESEARCH SAYS

Most teachers wait **0.9 seconds** after asking a question. Wait **5 seconds** instead. Answer quality goes up by 300%. Response rate triples. Quieter students participate.

**One question per silence.** *Don't fill silence with three rephrasings. Ask once. Wait. Let it be uncomfortable. They'll talk.*