

Relearn and retest



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What's the idea?

Relearn and retest is a type of active feedback that involves asking students to return to a previous piece of learning to ensure they have achieved full understanding or mastery.

What does it mean?

Relearn and retest is the fourth in a series of five 'actions' that students can take after receiving their work back. It is a simple technique where students return to previous learning to check they fully understand it. This addresses any gaps in knowledge that has already been taught and gets students into the routine of retrieval practice. It is a simple but specific form of feedback that says, 'You don't know this yet. Go back and relearn it.'

What are the implications for teachers?

In some cases, students may need to revisit previous learning and you may have to reteach particular ideas or knowledge that they haven't yet grasped.

More often than not, however, this technique is most effective for cementing existing knowledge. It involves the student self-quizzing and relearning work which they understand but have not fully committed to memory.

Ask students to practise repeatedly, using a variety of memory techniques (such as mnemonics, lists, imagery, etc) to ensure that key ideas, words, concepts, facts, details and quotations are learned.

Resist the urge to do it yourself; it can be tempting to give detailed feedback on work. However, asking the student to relearn key material first will not only save time, but also increase their capacity to retain this material in the long term.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

- » Black P and William D (2009) Developing the theory of formative assessment. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability* 21(1): 5–31.
- » Dann R (2017) *Developing Feedback for Pupil Learning: Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Schools*. London: Routledge.
- » Sherrington T (2017) Five ways of giving effective feedback. Available at: <https://teacherhead.com/2017/12/18/fiveways-of-giving-effective-feedback-as-actions/> (accessed 26 October 2018).
- » Sherrington T (2017) *The Learning Rainforest*. Suffolk, UK: John Catt Educational Ltd.