

Short guide 6: Creating resources your learners will understand

Key Ideas:

- ✓ Make a choice about which words need to be kept and which words can be simplified.
- ✓ Substitute the words you can get rid of and scaffold the important ones that are related to your trade.
- ✓ Keep the resources looking accessible, think about white space, images, bullet points and headings.
- ✓ Include opportunities for learners to engage with what they are reading.

Know your learner

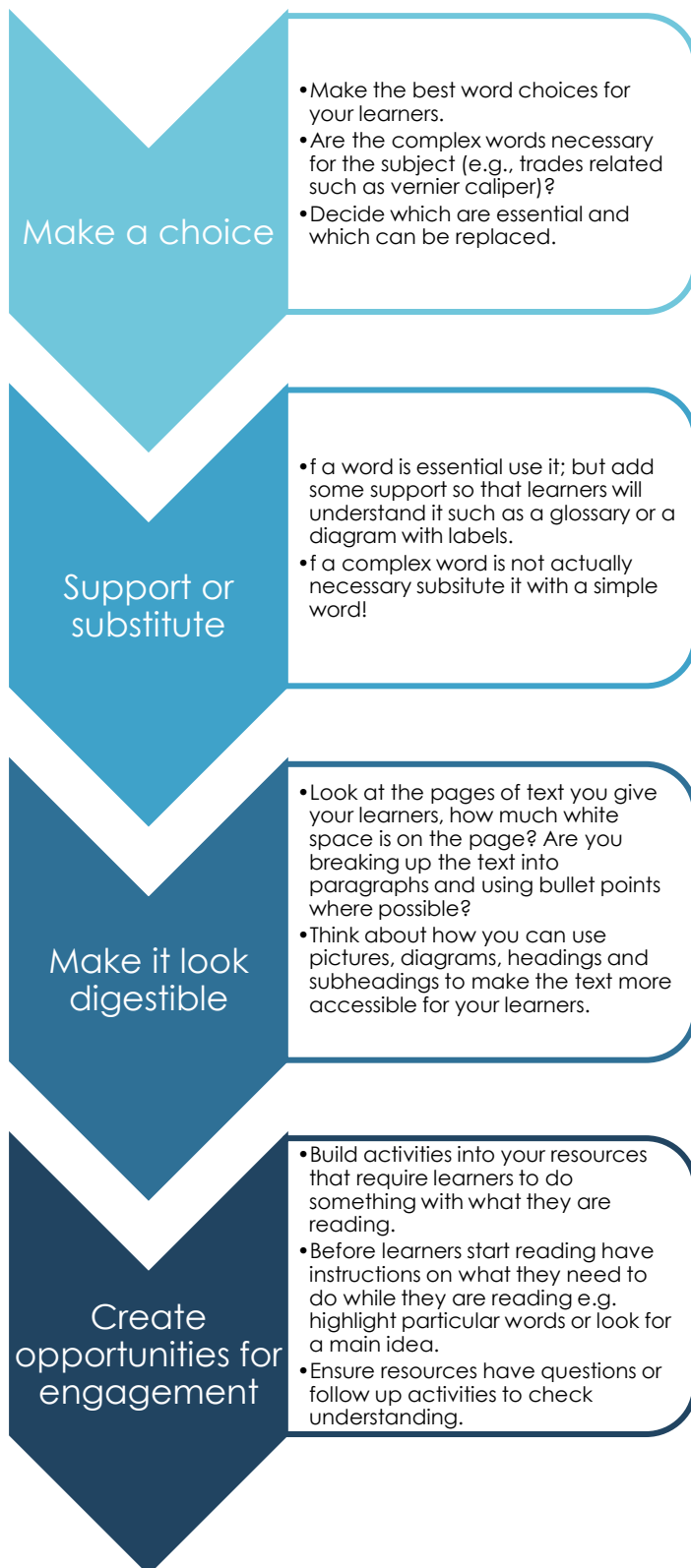
Creating written resources that are suitable for your learners starts with knowing your learner. Think about the language that your learners use themselves as this will be a good indicator of what type of language they are most likely to be able to comprehend in your written resources.

Why use complex words?

Some complex and technical words are essential for learners to understand. They cannot be successful on the job if they do not understand the words they need to use in the workplace. Words that are related to your trade should not be simplified. However, using outdated or large words that are not related to the trade instead of everyday language is just going to be a barrier. Make a call – do they need to know it on the job? If they do keep it, if they don't simplify it!

Keep it simple or scaffold it

Complicated and technical words that need to be kept in your resources should have some scaffolding to help learners understand them. As you create your resource try and identify what words learners will find challenging and make sure you define them in the resource.



Examples

What are you doing already?

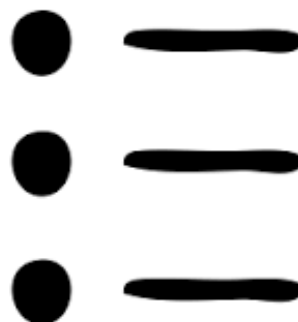
Every time you rethink a word choice in a resource, use headings and diagrams to help illustrate a point or rewrite a paragraph into simple bullet points you are creating resources with the learner in mind. These are strategies that ensure that your course content is actually understood by learners; below are some ideas



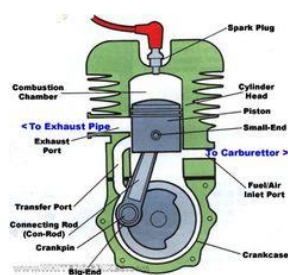
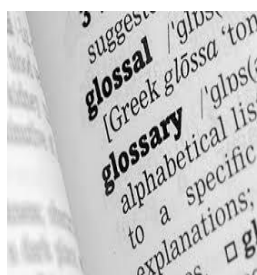
Think about your language

Affix	or	Stick on
Apparent	or	clear
Ascertain	or	Find out
Circumvent	or	Get around
Sufficient	or	Enough

Chunky paragraph or bullet points?



Make word meanings accessible



Glossaries are great but having word definitions on the page where the technical language appears is more effective. Diagrams with labels are effective too.

Make reading active

- ✓ Give learners space in your resources for them to brainstorm what they already know about the topic before they start reading.
- ✓ In your resources give learners instructions about what to do when they read e.g. **highlight key words** or underline unknown words
- ✓ Use arrows, diagrams and colours to draw their attention to key ideas
- ✓ Include questions and activities to make learners think about what they have read

Learners understand more about what they read when they need to do something with it. Make sure you build opportunities for active engagement in your written resources

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