CREATING LEARNER-CENTRED LESSONS:

Restoring back to students the agency for learning

Context – Adult TESOL Pre-beginners/Beginners

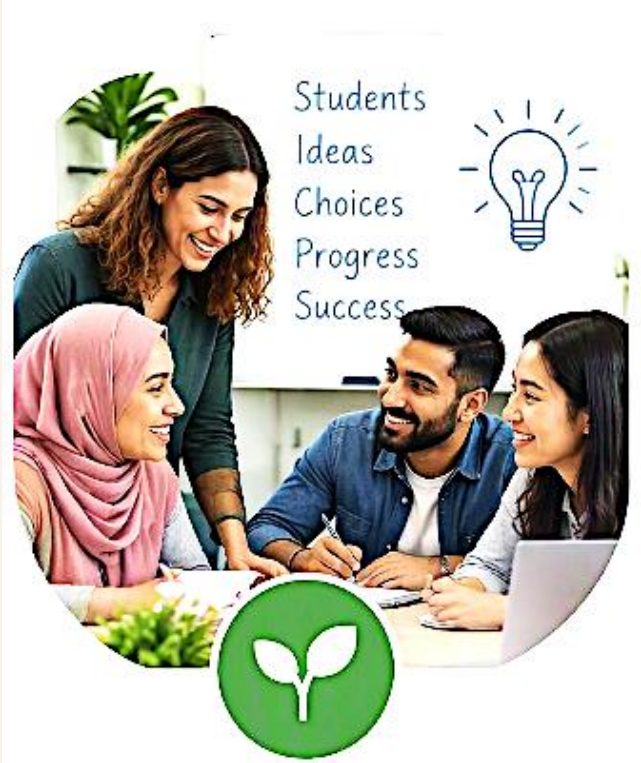


Visual: AI-generated using Microsoft Copilot. Concept developed by the presenter.

VIDHATRI VITTAL MALLYA

Workshop focus

Explore practical ways to create learner-centred classrooms



Workshop outcomes



Workshop process



Think of a recent lesson

✓ **Reflect**

Where did the control sit? (teacher? learner?)

What meaningful decisions did learners make in their learning of the topic?

✓ **Discuss with your group**

✓ **Report**

Show of hands on

predictable lesson structures build learner confidence

(lessons with similar activities, done in similar sequence)

- ✓ Discuss with your group
- ✓ Report

Structure of my lessons – strategies for effective scaffolding

- Introduce topic using images & words on PowerPoint
- Show a video – watch in whole group/individually (QR code)
- Matching/sequencing in small groups
- Speaking / Writing
- Hangman/board game to review topic



cabbage



garlic



apples



papayas



carrots



rice



buns



eggs



fish



tea

Lien Buys Food

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Lien buys food.



Lien buys cabbage.



Lien buys garlic.



She buys apples.



She buys papayas.



She buys carrots.



Lien buys rice.



She buys buns.



She buys eggs.



She buys fish.



She buys tea.



She goes home.

Lien Buys Food

https://youtu.be/htwG2HERhPY

Lien Buys Food



Adobe express QR code generator

https://www.adobe.com/express/feature/image/qr-code-generator

Lien Buys Food

writing/speaking

1. Lien buys food.
2. Lien buys c a b b a g e .
3. Lien buys g ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ .
4. She buys a ___ ___ ___ ___ ___.
5. She buys p ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___.
6. She buys c ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___.
7. Lien buys r ___ ___ ___.
8. She buys buns.
9. She buys e ___ ___ ___.
10. She buys f ___ ___ ___.
11. She buys t ___ ___.
12. Lien goes home.

1. Lien buys food.
2. Lien buys c a b b a g e .
3. Lien buys g a r l i c .
4. She buys a p p l e s .
5. She buys p a p a y a s .
6. She buys c a r r o t s .
7. Lien buys r i c e .
8. She buys buns.
9. She buys e g g s .
10. She buys f i s h .
11. She buys t e a .
12. Lien goes home.

Hangman

START

What's this?



You use a laptop for...



Is this iPad locked?



What's this?



You use a computer for...



Roll the dice again

What's this?



You use a television to....



Is this phone locked?



What's this?



What's this?



Go back to START.

Is this computer locked?



You use an iPad for...



What's this?



FINISH

You use a phone to...



You use an ATM to....



Is this computer locked?



Is this iPad locked?

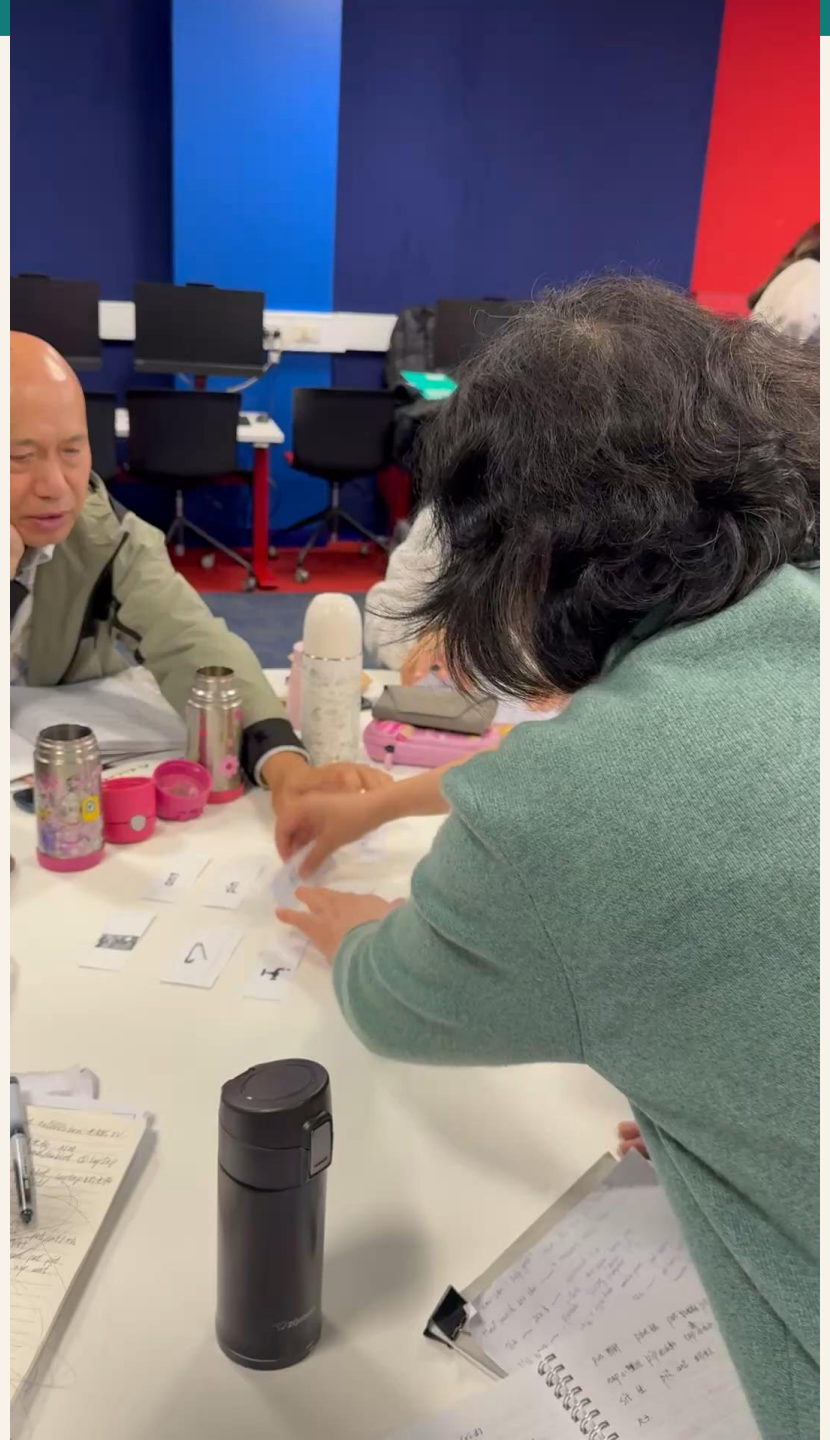


Is this phone locked?




Generate QR code





Deng starts school.

He gets a letter.

Deng needs many things.

Deng needs pencils.

Deng needs rubbers.

Deng needs pens.

Deng needs a ruler.

Deng needs glue.

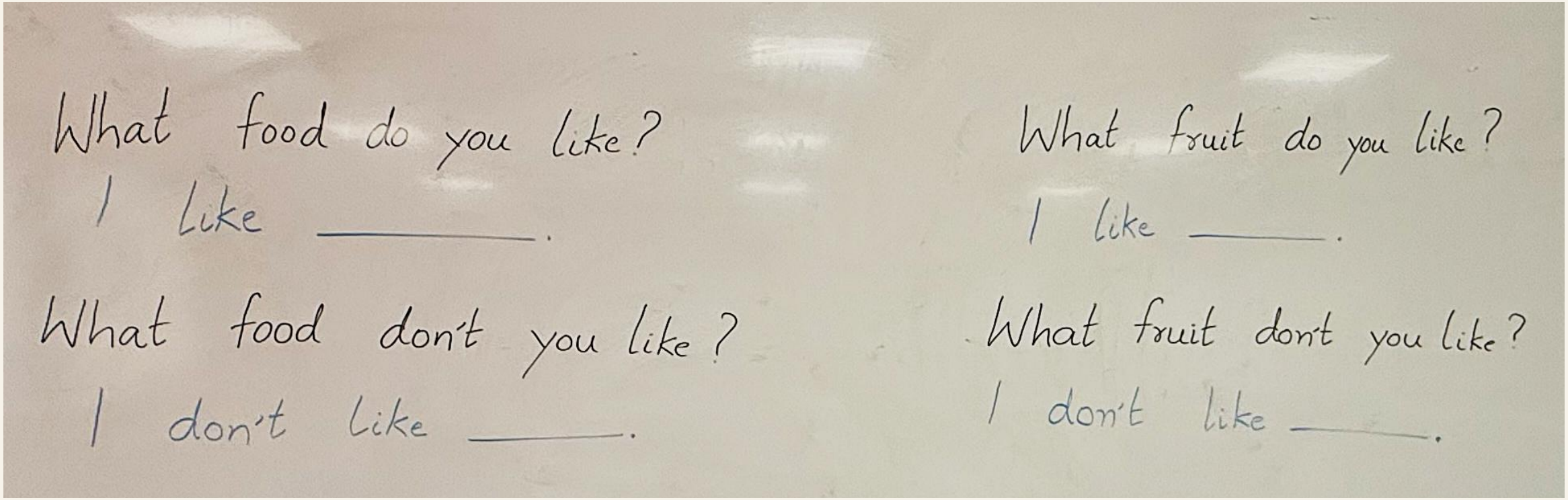
Deng needs shoes.

Deng needs a bag.



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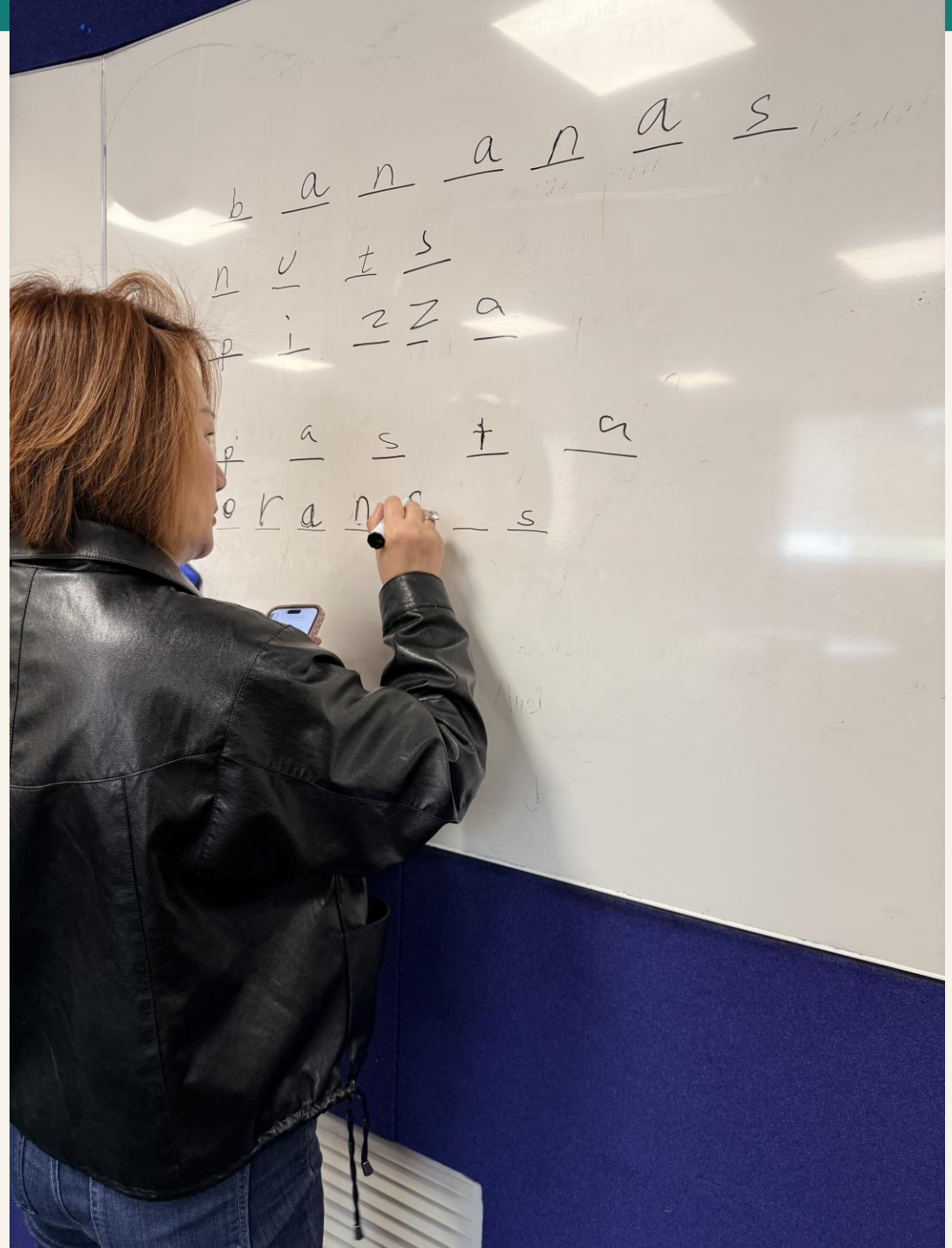



What food do you like?
I like _____.
What food don't you like?
I don't like _____.
What fruit do you like?
I like _____.
What fruit don't you like?
I don't like _____.

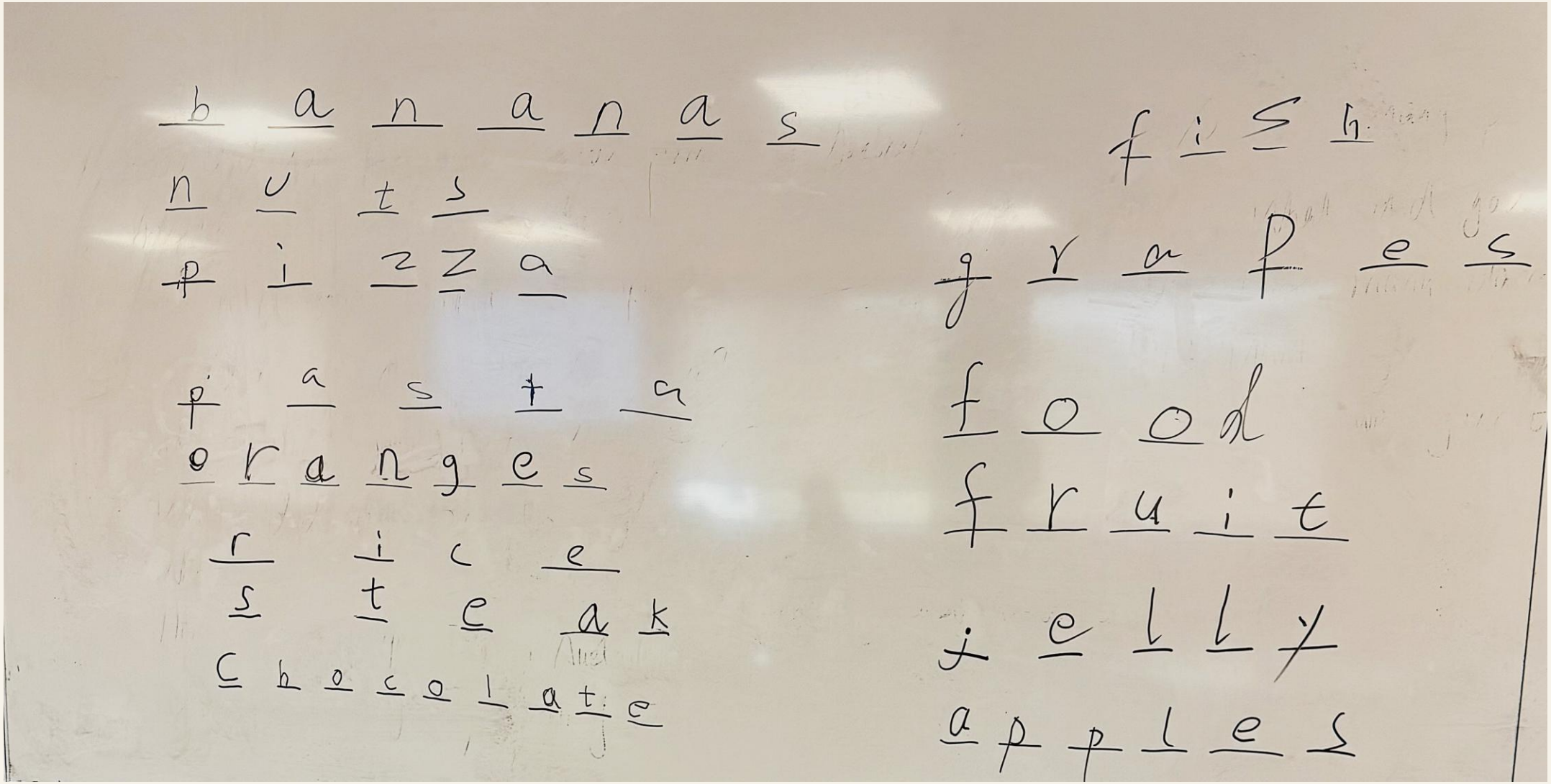


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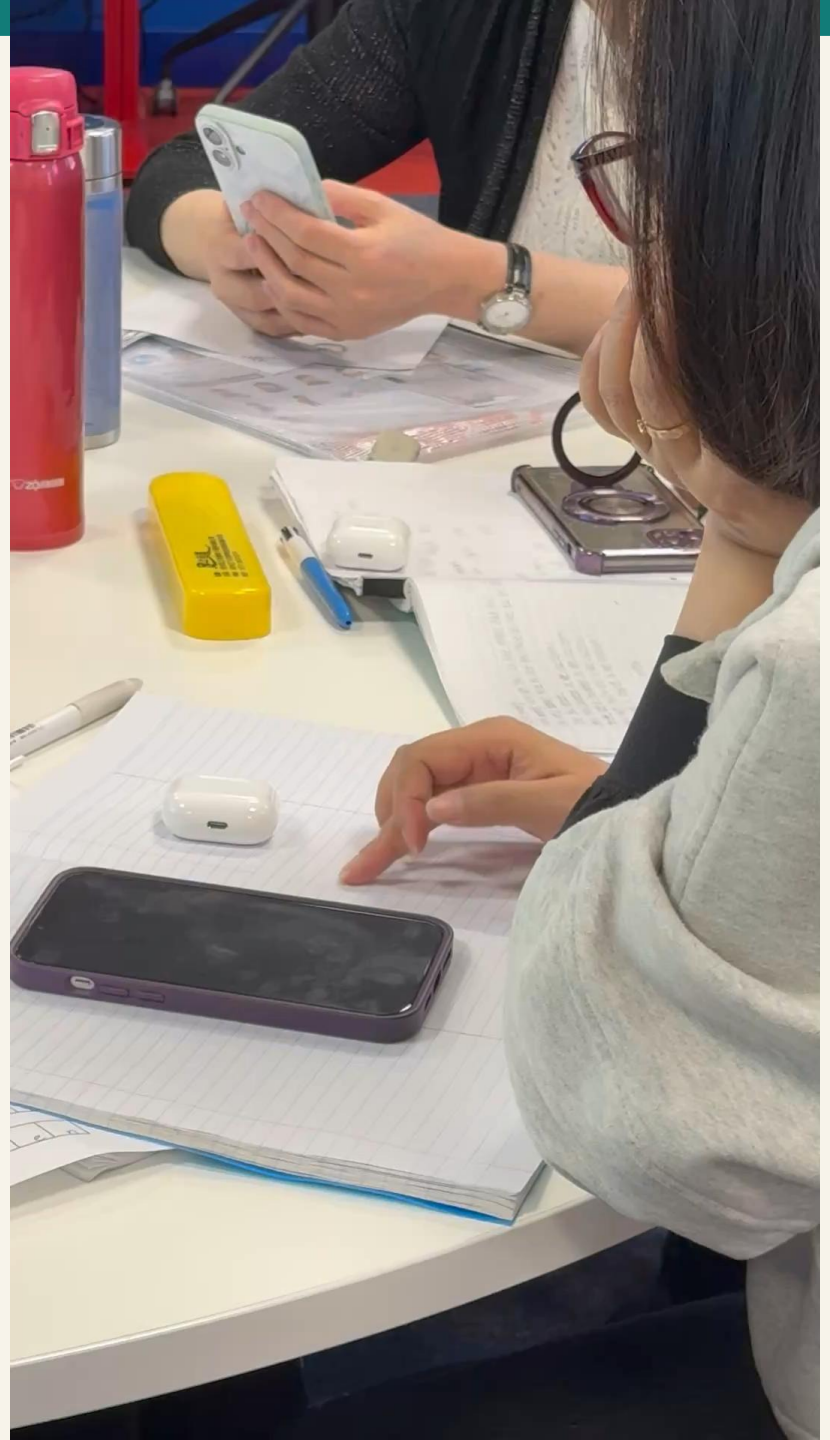




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banana
nuts
pizza
pasta
oranges
rice
steak
chocolate
fish
grapes
food
fruit
jelly
apples





Agency is not the absence of teaching

IT IS NOT

- unlimited choice
- learners working alone
- withdrawing structure or support
- abandoning learning outcomes

IT IS

- meaningful, accessible decisions
- clear goals with flexible routes
- support learners can request or select
- opportunities to act and review

Reflect on

What changes when learners influence...

PACE

how long to stay with a task

PATH

which route or support to choose

PROOF

how to show learning

✓ **Discuss with your group**

✓ **Report**

A simple design lens

You can use this framework to analyse any lesson before adding strategies.

FIXED	FLEXIBLE	LEARNER-OWNED
Learning goal Safety and access Essential evidence	Pace and sequence Number of tasks Level of scaffolding	Choice of route Request for support Reflection and next step

Four classroom moves that return agency

1

Observe before moving on

Use engagement, questions and task persistence as evidence.

2

Offer bounded choices

Let learners select task order, format or support.

3

Keep routines predictable

Familiar sequences free attention for meaningful decisions.

4

Carry learning forward

Pause with purpose and return to valued work next lesson.

A pathway to shift from control to agency

01 **Notice** Where does control sit now?

02 **Reframe** What meaningful decisions can learners make?

03 **Design** Build choice into pace, task and support

04 **Try** Apply one strategy to a real lesson

05 **Reflect** Decide what to change next

Let’s close with one small commitment

In my next lesson, I will return one meaningful decision to learners by…

Thank you

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Acknowledgement / Resources

- Microsoft Copilot was used to generate selected presentation visuals and support content development. All content was reviewed and adapted by Vidhatri Vittal Mallya for educational and professional learning purposes.

- LWA AMEP 2025 Conference, Workshop 10:
  Creating engaging activities for low-level learners using simple digital tools– 20 Nov 2025 https://www.atblwa.com.au/workshops-training/2025-2026/

- EAL Lower Levels CoP, Sep 2025, Lesson Planning: Creating a thriving environment for low-level learners, EAL Lower Levels CoP (Sep 2025)
  https://www.atblwa.com.au/communities-of-practice/eal-framework-cop/eal-cop-lower-levels/
  (presentation starts at 44 minutes)