

# Check pupil understanding

## 7A – Set short quizzes or tasks that check pupils’ understanding

After reading a text, teachers will want to check for understanding. There are a number of ways that teachers can do this effectively – Mini-whiteboards (MWBs), for instance, enable teachers to capture data on their whole class with low stakes tasks that are designed to check whether pupils have understood key concepts, relationships, or chronologies from the reading.

Focus of reading	Method of checking understanding	Example
Edward the Confessor and his relationship with Earl Godwin	<b>Think-Pair-Share</b> - The teacher circulates, listening to pupils' conversations as well as looking at the notes on their whiteboards to check their understanding.	Write one word on your MWB to describe the relationship between Edward and Godwin. Discuss with your partner why you chose that word.
The Treaty of Versailles	<b>MCQ</b> - incorrect answer options are designed to be plausible, and to tease out possible pupil misconceptions.	How did the Treaty of Versailles impact Germany? a) It removed them from the First World War b) It greatly weakened Germany c) It helped to make the new government more popular
The Spartacist Uprising	<b>Ordering Task</b> - These can be particularly powerful for checking understanding of historical events, or for understanding of narrative in English.	Put these events in order on your MWB a) Organisation of a general strike b) KPD founded c) Emil Eichhorn Sacked d) Death of Rosa Luxembourg e) Freikorps ordered to put down protest

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## Checking understanding of vocabulary

As well as checking general understanding of a passage pupils have just read, we will also want to check understanding of new vocabulary that has been taught.

Let's take as an example the word 'compassion', which could be taught in a range of different subjects. We could quiz pupils on this word in a number of different ways – these vary in difficulty and give us slightly different information about pupils' thinking.

Teachers should consider carefully which type of question is most appropriate, considering the class, how many times the words has been encountered, and when it was first taught.

### Examples:

#### 1. Free recall of definition

*Define the word 'compassion'*

#### 2. Cued recall of definition

*Compassion means feeling p\_\_\_\_\_ and s\_\_\_\_\_ for...*

#### 3. MCQ (recognition of definition)

*What is compassion?*

- Intense feelings of excitement and enthusiasm
- Pity and sympathy for the suffering of others
- Belief that people should be responsible for themselves only

#### 4. MCQ (conceptual understanding)

*Which of the following attitudes is showing compassion?*

- I don't care about homeless people – it's their own fault*
- People who haven't got a job are lazy – they just need to try harder*
- I want to give money to charity so I can help less fortunate people*

#### 5. Application task

*Describe a scenario where someone shows 'compassion'*