

Pedagogy – What is it and why does it matter?

March 2026

LXP Skills
LXP Talent

Today we will ...

P E D A G O G Y

- Define pedagogy and explain its relevance to apprenticeship and workplace learning.
- Identify the pedagogical choices you already make in your teaching or coaching practice.
- Reflect on how intentional teaching approaches can improve apprentice engagement.



Who am I?

Hollie Barnes-Lomax

- Lover of creating spaces and resources for **all** teachers and students/apprentices to collaborate, learn & thrive!
- Teaching and Learning Excellence Manager at FE college
- Teacher Training lecturer (L3 AET/L5 DiT/PGCE)
- Deputy Chair for SFEC Committee at English Association
- Education Quality and Standards board member for ETF

Let's get started...



Complete this sentence...

Pedagogy is.....

Pop an answer in the chat box

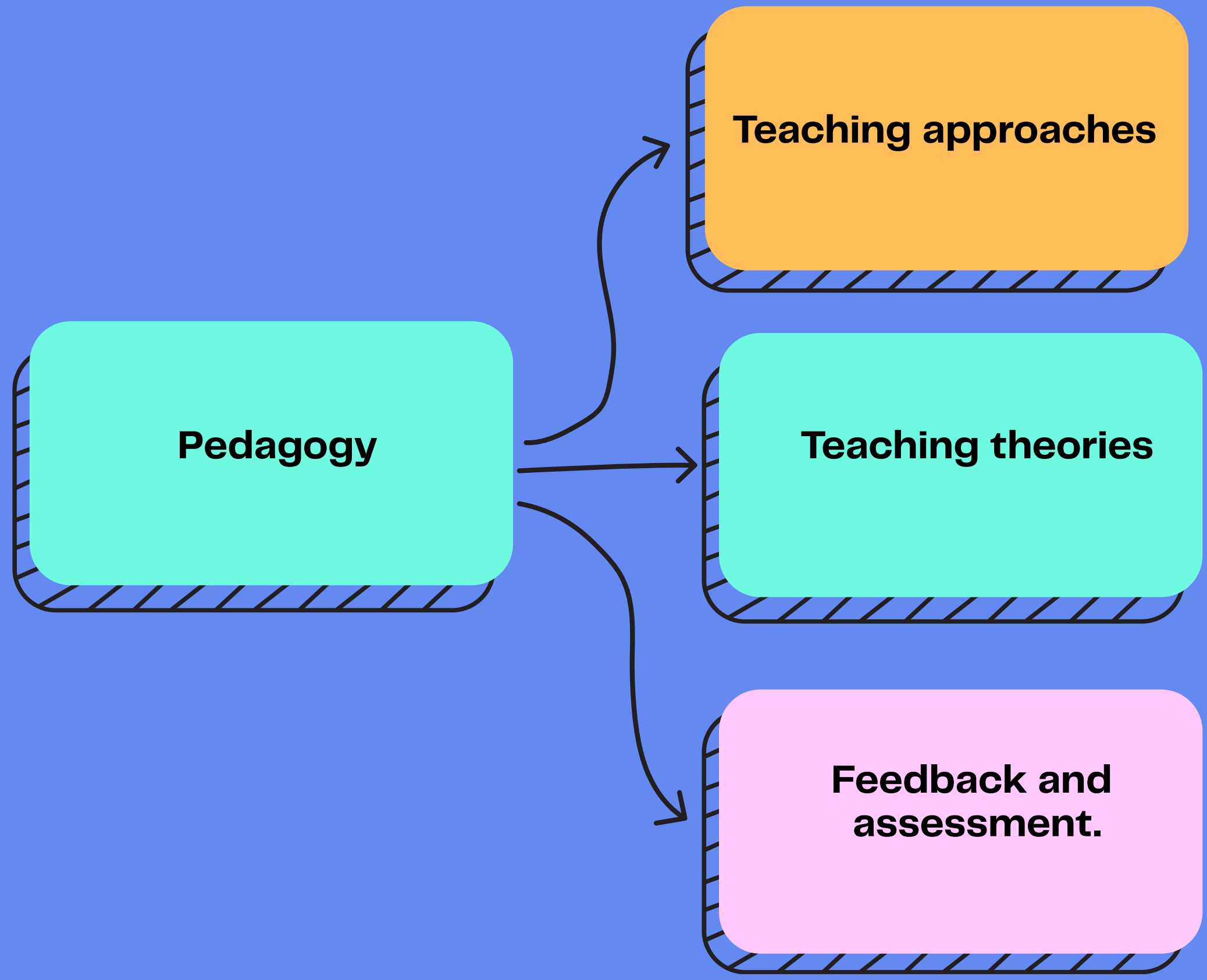
“Pedagogy is the **art, science, or profession of teaching.**”

”

Merriam Webster (2026)

“Pedagogy is the transformation of **subject matter into** forms that are comprehensible to learners.”

Shulman (1987)



Pedagogy

Teaching approaches

Teaching theories

**Feedback and
assessment.**

Not just activities

Pedagogy = the decisions we make about how we teach to support how learners learn

It includes:

- sequencing
- explanation
- questioning
- practice
- feedback



Pedagogy

What are the pedagogical approaches?

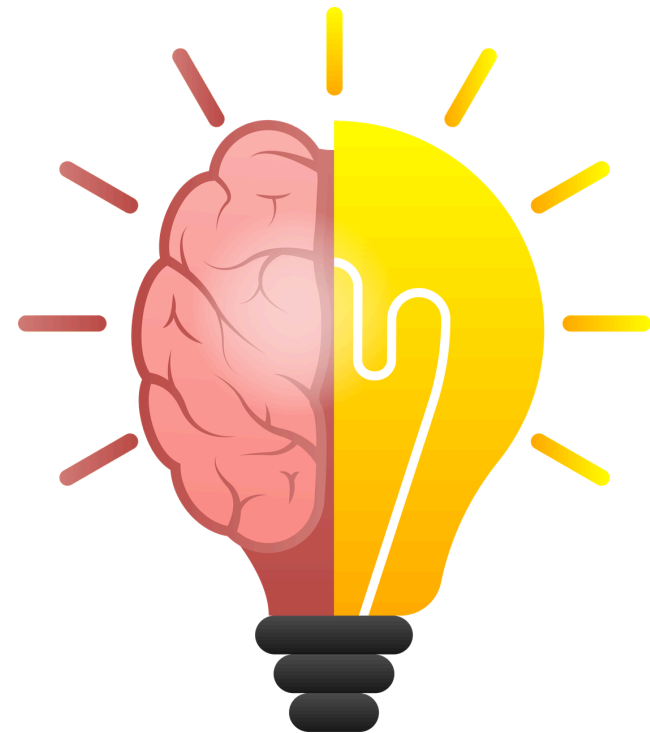
The different pedagogical approaches could be broken down into categories

- behaviourism
- constructivism
- social constructivism

Pedagogy x Work- Based/Apprentices

Why does it matter?

Pedagogical choices matter because they determine whether apprentices simply complete tasks or genuinely understand, apply and become independent in their work.



Over to you...



**what do you think pedagogy looks like
for you?
or for your setting?**

Pop an answer in the chat.

Where pedagogy happens

In apprenticeships:

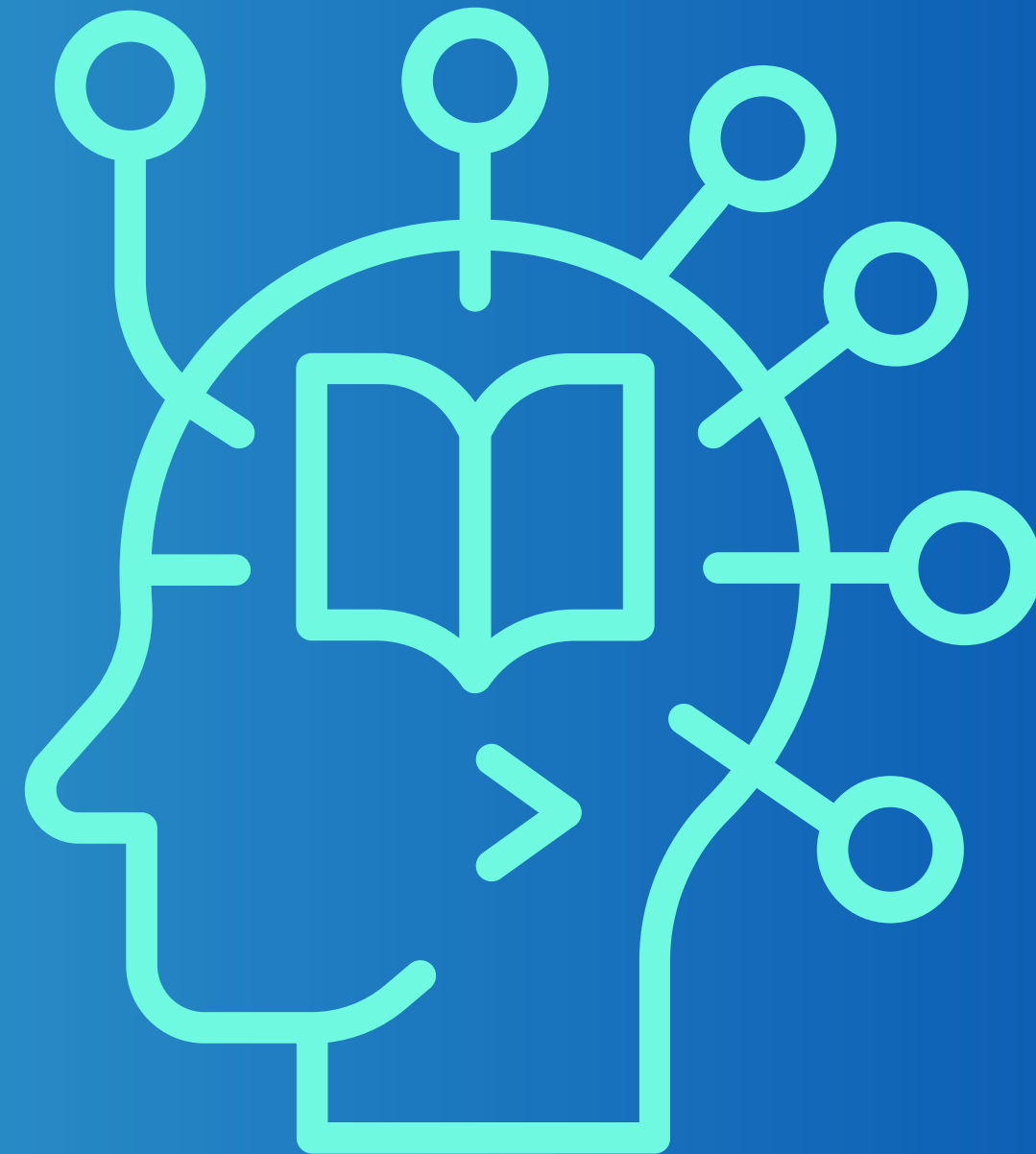
- On-site demonstrations
- 1:1 progress reviews
- Coaching conversations
- Workshops / classrooms

- Demonstrating skills in real environments
- Coaching through tasks in the moment
- Asking questions during practical work
- Giving immediate, verbal feedback
- Supporting problem-solving on the job
- Gradually stepping back to build independence



Apprentices need to apply, not just know

- competence
- transfer of skills
- real-world performance



Your Pedagogical choices

Over to you...



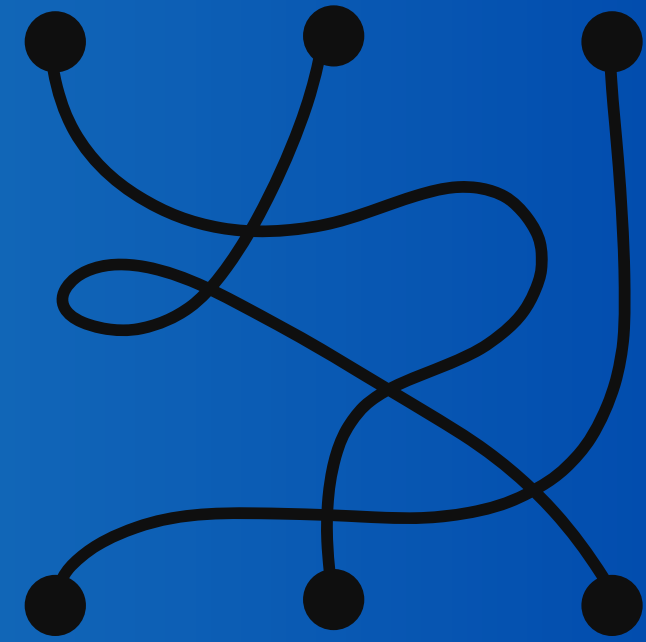
Think about your last interaction with an apprentice...

- What did you actually do to support their learning?
- When did you step in?
- When did you step back?
- How did you check they understood?
- What did you say or ask?

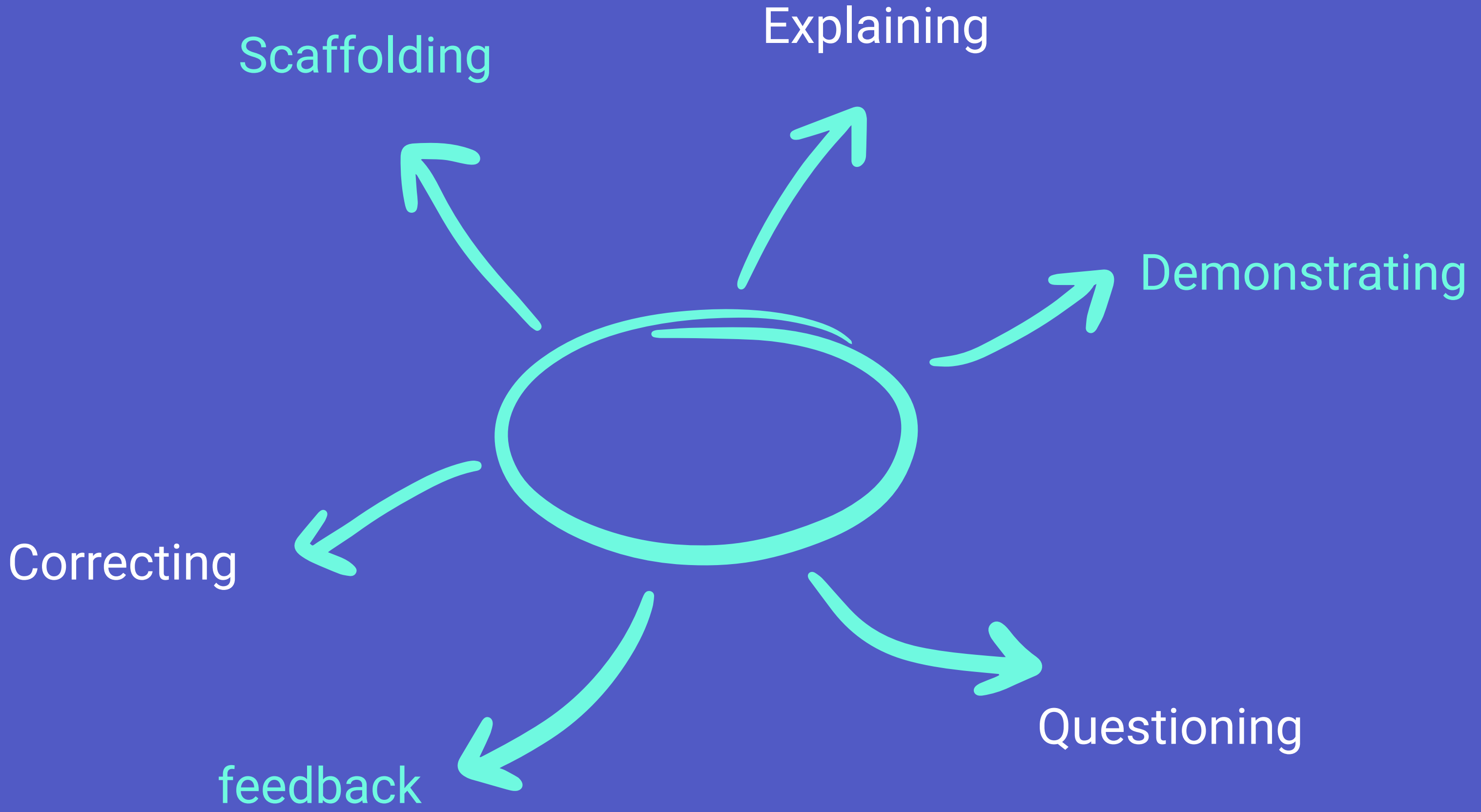
Pop an answer in the chat.

**You are already
making
pedagogical
choices**

- Every explanation
- Every question
- Every decision to step in or step back
- Every piece of feedback



These are not random, they shape learning



Explaining

Demonstrating

Questioning

feedback

Correcting

Scaffolding

Over to you...



Think about one thing you do regularly when working with apprentices...

- Why do you do it that way?
- What impact does it have on learning?
- Is it deliberate... or just habit?

Pop an answer in the chat.

**If pedagogy is about conscious choices, the first step to
improving it is recognising the choices you're already
making**

Intentional teaching approaches

Over to you...



What does an **engaged apprentice look like?**

Pop an answer in the chat.

Keep thinking



Does that always mean they're learning?

Pop an answer in the chat.



Unintentional pedagogy leads to...

- Apprentices copying without understanding
- Passive listening
- Task completion without learning
- Over-reliance on the tutor

Unintentional pedagogy

Unintentional	Intentional
Explaining once	Explain + question + check understanding
“Any questions?”	Targeted questioning
Watching a demo	Model + apprentice practise
General feedback	Specific, actionable feedback
Doing it for them	Scaffold then step back

”

“The teacher **must transform subject matter** into forms that are pedagogically powerful.”

(Shulman, 1987)



High-impact pedagogical approaches for engagement

Questioning

Targeted questions that make learners think and explain

Modelling with guided practice

Show, explain thinking, then support learners to try

Active Learning

Learners doing, applying and problem-solving

Immediate, specific feedback

Clear guidance that improves learning in the moment

Scaffolding towards independence

Support first, then gradually remove it

Key Takeaways

- Pedagogy is the intentional decisions you make that shape how apprentices learn in real workplace contexts.
- You are already using pedagogy every day – the key is recognising and making those choices deliberate.
- Engagement improves when your teaching deliberately makes apprentices think, apply and become independent.



Powerful Pedagogy: Effective Practice

Insights from the sector

- Students in Further Education tell us about the impact of their teachers' approaches
- Teachers tell us about their pedagogy
- Leaders tell us about their leadership of pedagogy

March 2025

Pause and Reflect

What is your one key takeaway from today?

Pop an answer in the chat

**Thank you for your
time**

Stay in touch

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References and Further Reading



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- Lawrie, P. (2020) What is the future in FE for TEL and digital pedagogy? Thoughts from the bike by an FE teacher educator. ALT Blog. Available at: <https://altc.alt.ac.uk/blog/2020/09/what-is-the-future-in-fe-for-tel-and-digital-pedagogy-thoughts-from-the-bike-by-an-fe-teacher-educator> (Accessed: 27 March 2026).