



'The reading and writing of Standard English, alongside proficient language development, is the key to unlocking the rest of the academic curriculum. Pupils who struggle to read struggle in all subjects and the wonders of a knowledge-rich curriculum passes them by unread.'

Ofsted Reading Framework 2021

The theme of this half term's reading bulletin is to embed vocabulary strategies and help to model language that supports all learners in the classroom.

As always, try any of these top tips to engage our pupils to embrace reading.
Got a great idea? Share it with us!



Bespoke Definitions

Introduce words through explanations in everyday connected language, rather than dictionary definitions.



Purposeful Variation

Provide several contexts in which the word can be used purposefully or for alternative meanings.



Immediate Interaction

Build opportunities for pupils to interact with word meanings right away e.g. pair two target words, to support interaction with words in novel contexts: 'can splendour ever be unpleasant to look at?'



Deep Processing

Develop activities that require students to process the meanings of words in deep and thoughtful ways e.g. getting pupils to think hard about meanings, by identifying and explaining appropriate word usage.



Active Interest

Provide examples, situations and questions that are interesting and create discussion.



Repetition, Repetition, Repetition

Provide many encounters with target words, including through various contexts and retrieval activities.

Range of Approach

Range of approach for teaching vocabulary and modelling language use in the classroom (adapted from Beck & McKeown).

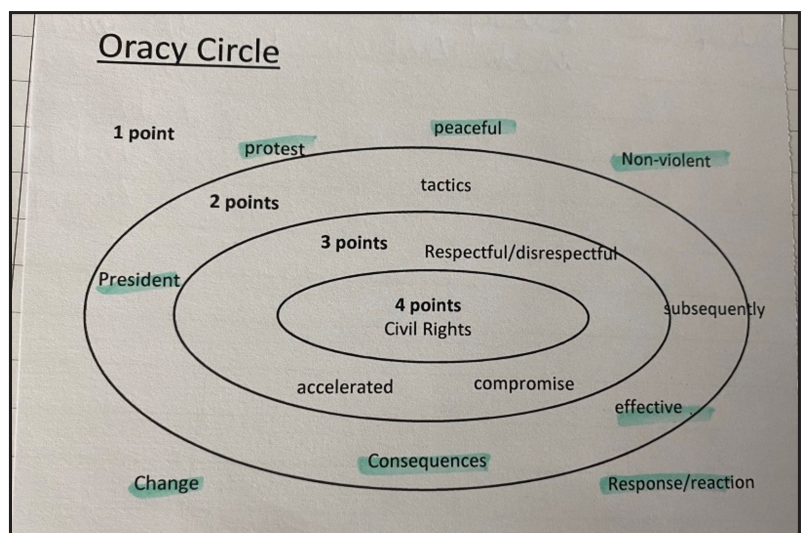
Use these techniques as part of teacher modelling, explanation, and pupil practice to support your vocabulary teaching.

[Vocabulary in action: EEF, Adapted from Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G. and Kucan, L. (2013) Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction, New York: Guildford. Beck, I. et al. (2018) Deepening knowledge through vocabulary learning, Impact Journal: Developing Effective Learners, (Issue 3, Summer 2018).]

Oracy Circles

Pupil A discusses an issue with their partner (pupil B). Pupil B highlights their use of key vocabulary during this 2 minute discussion on a pre-prepared Oracy Circle. This can then be repeated with Pupil A monitoring the language of Pupil B.

To increase the level of challenge you could give pupils blank Oracy Circles and ask them to categorise key language in the concentric circles.



Will the SLANT technique work for me?



Pupils sit quietly, straight-backed and attentive, tracking the teacher's face. They digest the input then respond to questions with full eye contact and a smile. A dream lesson or some kind of strange dystopia?

For the one in five neurodivergent pupils in our classrooms, there is no doubt that it would be the latter. Enforced posture, attention and eye contact – summed up within the acronym, Slant – was pioneered in many US schools a decade ago and is being adopted by schools across the UK.

Developed by Teach Like a Champion author Doug Lemov, the Slant technique requires pupils to “sit up, listen, ask and answer questions, nod your head, track the speaker”.

But behaviour and special educational needs and disability (SEND) policies can't possibly marry with this approach....for more of this article visit [‘Slant’ won't work for SEND students, so what does? - ADHD Foundation : ADHD Foundation](#)

Further discussion can be found on these articles:

[Blackpool Research School](#) | [S.L.A.N.T In The Classroom](#) | [SLANT - TLAC Project](#)

Using podcasts in the classroom

Podcasts are a great way of getting children and young people interested in a range of topics. Our research also shows that children and young people who listen to podcasts are more likely to enjoy reading for pleasure, so you can also use them to encourage further reading around, a topic as well as promoting a love of storytelling.

This helpful graphic from the National Literacy Trust illustrates why they can be so useful. For more resources link this please follow this [link](#).

Some examples you might find useful for the classroom are:

Geography: [Ask the Geographer Podcasts](#)

Art & Design: [99% Invisible Podcast](#)

History: [Revisionist History Podcast](#)

English/RE/PSHE: [Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls Podcast](#)

Science/DT/Engineering (and much more!): [Radiolab Podcasts](#)

PE: [Sports Squad Podcast](#) and for A-Level [Sports Podcasts - The Athletic](#)

Government & Politics: [Podcast | Alastair Campbell \(both the 'Leading' and 'The Rest is Politics'\)](#)

As podcasts are audio rather than image-based, they may help encourage children to use their imagination.

Podcasts can be a great way to inspire conversation. Consider how you might use podcasts, or an extract from a podcast, to develop exploratory, dialogic and Socratic talk. More resources on these talk techniques can be found on our [website](#).

Listening to podcasts can be a great way of involving a whole class in an activity that doesn't involve an individual device or screen.

Guests, interviewers and reporters on podcasts will be experts not only in podcasting but often in their specialist subjects, so are great for modelling talk. Play a podcast or podcast extract in a lesson to build exposure to tier 2 vocabulary and help your students learn to speak like experts!

Encouraging reading around a subject is really important, especially at secondary school, for building cultural capital and background knowledge as well as understanding subject-specific ways of presenting information. Podcasts are a great way of promoting interest in a subject, for example science or history, that might then lead students to read more in their own time.

Most podcasts are free and can be accessed on smartphones, laptops and smart speakers through free apps such as Spotify, BBC Sounds, Audible or Podbean. You can also listen and stream using websites and smart speakers.

Why not create your own podcast? All you need is a sound recording app (you can download these on smartphones and computers) and some free basic editing software. Get students to write their own script, interview each other or even invite local guests or teachers to talk. You could share your podcast on your school website for parents, friends and families to listen to.

Because students can listen to podcasts in their own time, they can help support blended learning during potential school closures. Consider setting a task, for example a writing or comprehension exercise, that uses a podcast as a starting point.

Listening comprehension is a key skill at all ages and using podcasts in the classroom and as homework can help to teach this. This is particularly useful when helping older students prepare for university where they will be doing a lot of listening!

Check out our Library resources:

[Recommended Reading for KS3](#) | [Challenging Reading for KS3](#) | [A Guide to Support Reading at Home for Parents](#)