



St Christopher's

# Reading and Literacy Bulletin

Half Term 3 | January 2024

**'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

## 'Reading and writing floats on a sea of talk'

**Britton, J. (1983). Writing and the story of the world. In B. M. Kroll & C. G. Wells (Eds.), Explorations in the development of writing: Theory, research, and practice (pp. 3–30). New York, NY: Wiley.**

The theme of this half term's bulletin is a focus on oracy, and how it intertwines with our work on reading and literacy to support classroom practice, preparing our pupils to succeed in assessment. This reflects a gradual shift in the national picture, as the status of oracy in the architecture of our education system does not fully reflect its value and importance to children and young people's outcomes in school and life. For example, in 2019 only 8% of Ofsted inspection reports mentioned oracy or associated terms [APPG Executive Summary, July 2021]. The following extract from the Faculty of Education at Cambridge University sums up the importance of developing pupils' Oracy skills, not just for the classroom, but for life beyond St Christopher's:

*In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the need to help young people develop their abilities to use spoken language effectively. Employers commonly say that members of their workforce, especially those engaged in creative activities and customer-related roles, need well-developed skills in communication and collaborative problem-solving.*

*They want people who can make clear presentations, work well in teams, listen properly to people and solve problems collaboratively...If it is accepted that schools should be helping children to develop such skills, then teachers need ways of monitoring and assessing the oracy skills of their students in a classroom setting so that they can aid the development of these vital skills.*

[Oracy Assessment Toolkit : Faculty of Education \(cam.ac.uk\)](https://www.cam.ac.uk/oracy-assessment-toolkit)

<b>VISUAL</b> WHAT WE SEE...	<b>VOCAL</b> HOW WE SAY IT...	<b>VERBAL</b> WHAT WE SAY...
Eye Contact	Clarity	Stories
Facial Expression	Pitch	Facts & Statistics
Posture	Pace	Quotations
Hand Gestures	Pause	Jokes
Movement	Projection	Rhetoric
Body Language	Emphasis	Imagery
Appearance	Tone	Opinion

<b>PHYSICAL</b>	<b>COGNITIVE</b>	<b>SOCIAL &amp; EMOTIONAL</b>
<b>Voice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pace of speaking</li> <li>Tone variation</li> <li>Clarity of pronunciation</li> <li>Voice projection</li> </ul>	<b>Content</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choice of content to convey meaning &amp; intention</li> <li>Building on the views of others</li> </ul>	<b>Working with others</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guiding or managing interactions</li> <li>Turn-taking</li> </ul>
<b>Body language</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gesture &amp; posture</li> <li>Facial expression &amp; eye contact</li> </ul>	<b>Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure &amp; organisation of talk</li> </ul>	
<b>Vocabulary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate vocabulary choice</li> </ul>	<b>Clarifying &amp; summarising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seeking information &amp; clarification through questioning</li> <li>Summarising</li> </ul>	<b>Listening &amp; responding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening actively &amp; responding appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Language</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register</li> <li>Grammar</li> </ul>	<b>Self-regulation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining focus on task</li> <li>Time management</li> </ul>	<b>Confidence in speaking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self assurance</li> <li>Liveliness &amp; flair</li> </ul>
<b>Rhetorical techniques</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rhetorical techniques such as metaphor, humour, irony &amp; mimicry</li> </ul>	<b>Reasoning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Giving reasons to support views</li> <li>Critically examining ideas &amp; views expressed</li> </ul>	<b>Audience awareness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking account of level of understanding of the audience</li> </ul>

According to Oracy action charity Voice21 the Oracy All-Party Parliamentary Group's (APPG) Inquiry found that two-thirds of primary teachers (69%) and nearly half of secondary teachers (44%) said school closures had a negative effect on the spoken language development of students eligible for pupil premium. Of the children who persistently experienced poverty, 75 % arrive at school below average in language development. Around 50% of children in some areas of deprivation begin school with delayed language. The pandemic has also widened the language gap. A summary of the APPG report can be found [here](#).

The Education Endowment Foundation argues that Oracy intervention can bring an additional 6 months progress for those learners targeted by oral language approaches (some of which are referenced alone) and whilst most studies focus on reading outcomes (5+ months in secondary education) some small samples show positive impact on Maths and Sciences as well (1+ months in secondary education).

Oral language approaches might include the following\*:

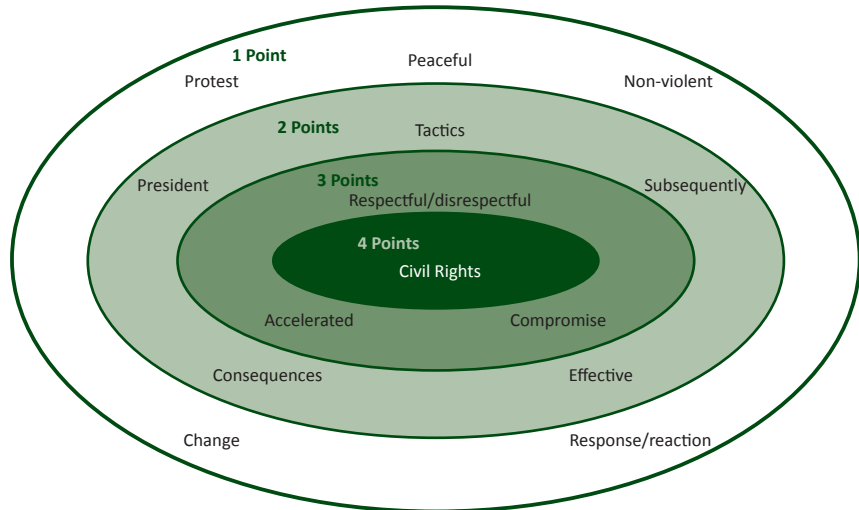
- Targeted reading aloud and book discussion with their peers (reading strategies)
- Explicitly extending pupils' spoken vocabulary (tiered vocabulary)
- The use of structured questioning to develop reading comprehension and modelling inference (questioning in T/L CPD)
- Group or paired work that allows pupils to share thought processes (metacognitive skills)
- The use of purposeful, curriculum-focused, dialogue and interaction that extends pupils written work (literacy strategies)

\*NOTE THAT THE STRATEGIES ABOVE HAVE ALL BEEN COVERED IN OUR PREVIOUS BULLETINS AND CPD

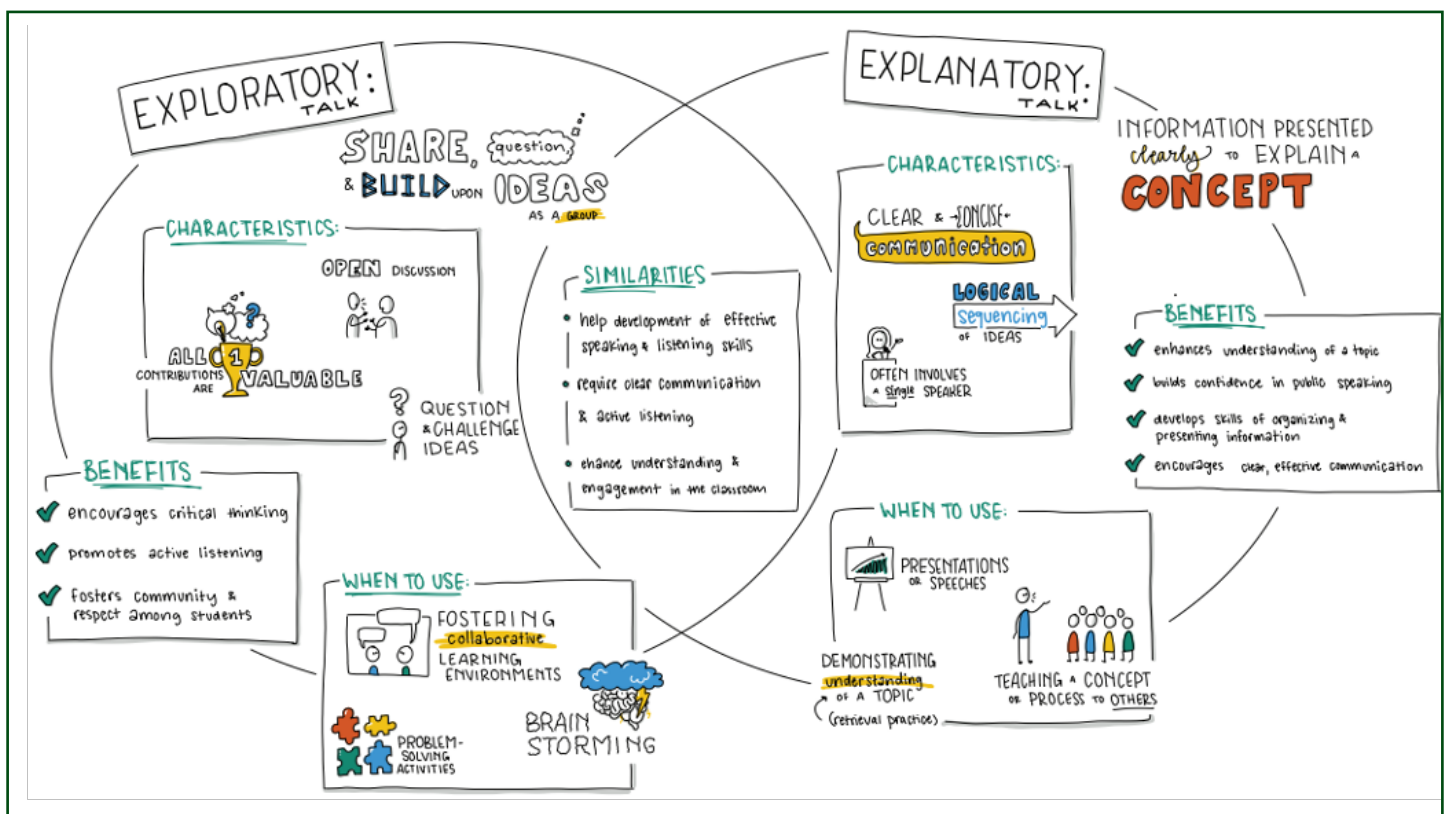
## Re-visiting Oracy Circles (April 2023)

This helpful exercise was first published in our April 2023 issue of the bulletin, and it feels pertinent now to remind readers of how useful exercises such as this can be in our classrooms.

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



## Is Oracy just talking more? Exploring exploratory and explanatory talk:



# How does Oracy help attainment?

<p><b>01</b></p> <p><b>Talk before writing</b></p> <p>Pupils model through and language before they put pen to paper.</p> <p><b>Benefit from discussing ideas before they try to write about them.</b></p> <p>Collaborative reasoning.</p>	<p><b>02</b></p> <p><b>Talk for assessment</b></p> <p>Writing is less immediate than talk.</p> <p><b>Misconceptions can be addressed immediately.</b></p>	<p><b>03</b></p> <p><b>Talk share and refine ideas</b></p> <p>Oracy allows for the sharing of ideas, which can be refined through challenge.</p>	<p><b>04</b></p> <p><b>Talk to build higher-order thinking skills</b></p> <p>Effective oracy enables teachers to move away from the lower tiers of Blooms Taxonomy.</p>	<p><b>05</b></p> <p><b>Talk to build vocabulary</b></p> <p>Using effective vocabulary in classroom can aid achievement</p> <p><b>Promoting and scaffolding high quality talk can close the vocabulary gap.</b></p> <p>Supports EAL to widen vocabulary and has an impact on writing.</p>
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## What do good presentation skills look like?

This resource from 'Talk the talk' ([Talk About Communication Resources - Talk the Talk \(talkthetalkuk.org\)](http://TalkAboutCommunicationResources-TalktheTalk(talkthetalkuk.org))) focuses on a revision of the presentation skills needed to be a good speaker. Using one of President Obama's famous speeches, students will identify and discuss the visual, vocal, verbal and persuasive language techniques employed.

A further example of excellent practice can be found [here](#) with Cambridge University's Oracy Assessment Toolkit videos. This example is their 'gold' standard. For more like it please visit [Video & Audio: "Oracy Assessment Toolkit Videos" \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

## Further reading:

- Leading resource hub for Oracy, 'Voice21' has a wealth of resources for teachers to browse, including this article highlighting [Oracy Across the Curriculum: The Evidence - Voice 21](#)
- EEF Report on Oral Language Interventions, published July 2021 [Oral language interventions | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)
- Academic article outlining that dialogue and class participation in maths led to increased maths achievement for students not considered proficient [Learning through explaining and engaging with others' mathematical ideas: Mathematical Thinking and Learning: Vol 25, No 4 \(tandfonline.com\)](#)
- Government report on the impact of the pandemic and the importance of Oracy in schools [Speak for Change Inquiry - report launched April 2021 | Oracy APPG \(inparliament.uk\)](#) with an Executive Summary [Executive Summary-Oracy APPG final report \(1\).pdf \(inparliament.uk\)](#)

## Check out our Library resources:

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