



Oracy at Netherton Infant School



Why oracy matters

“The things we say and how we say them can inform, influence, inspire and motivate others and express our empathy, understanding and creativity. It is our ability to communicate that enables us to build positive relationships, collaborate for common purpose, deliberate and share our ideas as citizens.”

Oracy Aims

To help pupils develop their speaking and listening skills and become more confident, articulate speakers.

Voice 21 sets out four strands of oracy - **Physical, Linguistic, Cognitive and Social and Emotional.**

The ‘physical’ includes elements such as voice projection, using eye contact and gesture. ‘Linguistic’ involves using appropriate vocabulary and choosing the right language for different occasions; ‘cognitive’ is about organising the content of your speech and ‘social and emotional’ includes working with others, taking turns and developing confidence in speaking.



Cognitive

Content

- Choice of content to convey meaning & intention
- Building on the views of others

Reasoning

- Giving reasons to support views
- Critically examining ideas & views expressed

Structure

- Structure & organisation of talk

Clarifying & summarising

- Seeking information & clarification through questioning
- Summarising



Body language

- Gesture & posture
- Facial expression & eye contact

Physical

Voice

- Fluency & pace of speaking
- Tonal variation
- Clarity of pronunciation
- Voice projection



Language

- Register
- Grammar

Vocabulary

- Appropriate vocabulary choice

Rhetorical techniques

- Rhetorical techniques such as metaphor, humour, irony & mimicry

Linguistic

Audience awareness

- Taking account of level of understanding of the audience

Confidence in speaking

- Self-assurance
- Liveliness & flair

Listening & responding

- Listening actively & responding appropriately

Working with others

- Guiding or managing interactions
- Turn-taking



Social & Emotional

Planning and teaching oracy

To teach oracy successfully, you must first have a strong understanding of what constitutes good oracy in different contexts, for example how the oracy skills needed to engage in discussion differ compared to those needed for debate, and how spoken language differs from written.

To be an effective oracy teacher, you must think carefully about how you will develop your students' oracy skills, deliberately planning tasks such as collaborative problem solving, peer teaching or presentations. You will ensure that students have been taught the skills needed to undertake this successfully and that, over time, they have opportunities to develop a range of oracy skills.

There will also be opportunities to develop oracy which arise in your everyday teaching. For example:

- When modelling how to challenge or probe a student's idea during a whole-class discussion
- Deliberately drawing attention to the level of formality with which you are speaking in a given situation.

What oracy looks like in the classroom-

<https://vimeo.com/383104481>

Oracy benchmarks and framework can be found on our school website-

[Voice 21- Oracy | Netherton Infant School](#)

1 - Create Discussion Guidelines

Before starting we will need to establish a set of class discussion guidelines. Once they are aware of the conventions of good discussion, they can regulate their own, leading to more productive speaking and listening and deeper thinking.

Each class will work with the children to create their own individualised guidelines, this could be in the form of a poster, a display, or a list of skills needed for good oracy.

To do this each class will be shown examples of poor and good listening and discussion. This could be through role-play, discussion or create a short film with other adults or children to show a particularly poor discussion. From this discuss different ways to improve discussion and create a set of guidelines.

Using the stem sentence "We will show good listening and discussion by....." See what the class comes up with and narrow these down to 5 or 6 guidelines which everyone agrees with to become your guidelines. You can also use the Voice 21 discussion poster; this is more suited to KS1.

Once created, our class guidelines will be displayed and celebrated and referred to before discussions or debates across all areas of the curriculum.

Voice 21 Discussion Guidelines

DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

WE GIVE PROOF OF LISTENING



WE RESPECT OTHERS' IDEAS

WE BUILD, CHALLENGE, SUMMARISE,
CLARIFY, AND PROBE EACH OTHER'S IDEAS



WE ARE PREPARED TO CHANGE OUR MIND



WE INVITE OTHERS INTO OUR DISCUSSION



WE TRY TO REACH A SHARED AGREEMENT



2 - Developing Sentence Stems

Sentence stems help to develop the quality and structure of discussions and encourage child participation these are some we have come up with, however each class can create their own list which are relevant to their class.



3- Develop Talk Roles

Talking Roles

The talking roles are -

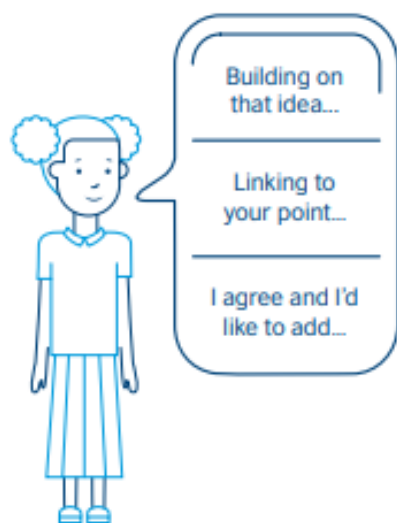
- Builder
- Instigator
- Challenger
- Clarifier
- Prober
- Summariser

The roles will be explained and modelled within discussions and debates. Model the sorts of language or phrases these characters might use to make their points clearly and politely. For example, the instigator might open a discussion by saying "I would like to start by saying'.

We will begin with a couple of roles for instance the builder and then the instigator before moving on to the other roles, introducing these gradually as they become more confident. With the younger children the adults will take on the roles as needed.

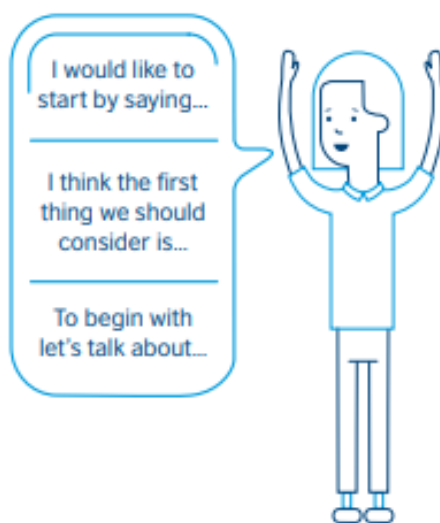
When the children are ready, we will cut out and laminate the 6 talking roles and ask members of the class to try using some of these roles independently. Talking roles will be used and developed through various oracy activities within all areas of the curriculum.

Talking roles



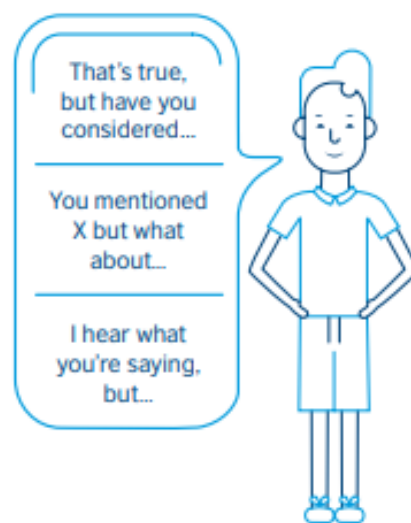
Builder

Develops, adds to or runs with an idea



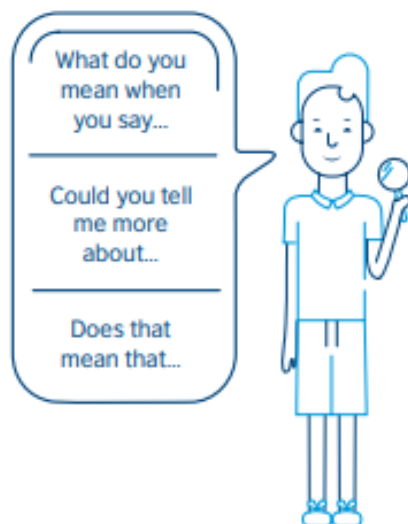
Instigator

The person who starts the discussion



Challenger

Disagrees with or presents an alternative argument



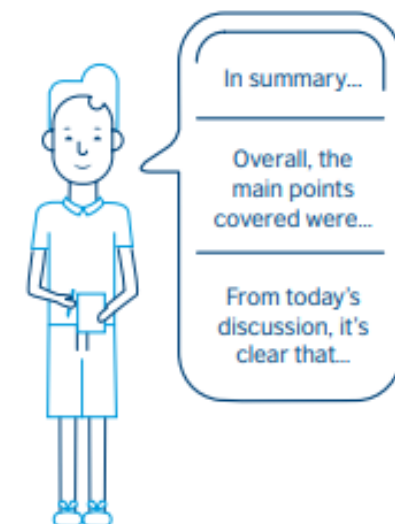
Clarifier

Makes things clearer and simplifies ideas by asking questions



Prober

Digs deeper into the argument, asks for evidence or justification of ideas



Summariser

Presents reflections on the discussion. May offer a conclusion or balanced assessment of the main points

4- Talk Groups

Different types of groupings are suited to various types of spoken activities. Think about the types of conversations you want your children to have and try out some different grouping strategies illustrated.

Trios for example may be effective for carrying out a problem-solving investigation, whereas Traverse might be a technique that could be used for sharing ideas.

Encourage them to use the talk sentences, listen to each other and try to reach a shared agreement.

Nest

Students stand apart and whisper their ideas to themselves



Pairs

Two students talking together



Trios

Three students talking with each other. Two students have a discussion while the third observes while the third summarises and critiques



Circle (of 6 to 12 students)

A group of six students face each other in a circle. Pupils step inside the circle individually and speak to the group, considering their audience, maintaining good eye contact and using appropriate body language



Traverse

Pupils stand in two parallel lines opposite a speaking partner



Coaching Onion/ Fishbowl

A coaching onion is a useful tool for switching discussion partners as pupils on the inner circle can rotate to face someone new. It also allows students to contribute ideas to a larger group without worrying



Onion

Students form an inner and outer circle. Up to six pupils stand back-to-back in the inner circle, with each facing a partner on the outer circle



Different types of talk

<u>Context</u>	<u>Types of talk</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
<u>Answering teacher questions</u>	<u>Exploratory/ Presentational</u>	This could be exploratory or presentational depending on the context. Are students developing their understanding, sharing partially formed ideas to be probed or developed by their classmates or teacher (exploratory) or are they presenting their understanding of a topic to the class (presentational)?
<u>A debate</u>	<u>Presentational</u>	In a formal debate, students put forward an argument for a viewpoint which may or may not be their own. The purpose is to win over an audience or judge to their viewpoint. The focus is on tailoring their speech to the needs of an audience, as opposed to developing their own knowledge and understanding through talk, and is therefore presentational.
<u>Giving a summary</u>	<u>Presentational</u>	Giving a summary is usually presentational as the focus is on identifying and sharing the key points or ideas and sharing these in order to further someone else's understanding.
<u>Teaching a concept to another person</u>	<u>Presentational</u>	Here the focus is on developing someone else's understanding. Students would have to consider how best to explain a concept, taking into account their peer's prior knowledge and adjusting the content and language used accordingly.
<u>Hot seating</u>	<u>Exploratory</u>	Hot seating is about developing a students' understanding of a character. They must sit in role and answer questions they may not have considered before. Students might share hesitant, partially formed ideas, applying their knowledge of a character in a different context in order to further their own understanding.
<u>Role Play</u>	<u>Exploratory/ Presentational</u>	If students are engaging in open-ended role play, exploring how to use language in new and imaginative ways and consolidating their knowledge and understanding through meaningful experiences, it is exploratory. However, if students are presenting a short piece of drama, sharing the key events in a story, for example, to an audience, the context is presentational.

Examples of different oracy activities

Talk Detectives

To support reflective, metacognitive thinking in oracy it is useful to employ oracy-specific models for feedback and reflection. These can develop students' understanding of the unconscious processes underlying talk, as well as reinforce the shared language for oracy you are developing in the classroom

One effective strategy of doing this is to hand responsibility for monitoring discussions over to a couple of students or "**talk detectives**" who have a set of talk focused success criteria.

Equipped with a clipboard, the talk detectives sneak around the classroom eavesdropping on the discussions going on and noting the things they hear to offer feedback to the class.

Talk detectives can look out for whatever area of oracy you are working on as a class.

If you are focusing on embedding discussion guidelines, explored earlier in this unit, they could look out for whoever is adhering to these.

If you are working on developing students' understanding of the Oracy Framework, a sheet structured around the four strands would be more appropriate.

Click on the link to see Talk Detectives in action!

[60-Second Strategy: Talk Detectives - YouTube](#)





Talk detectives!

Mystery to solve: what does good oracy look like?

	Person or group name
Invited someone else to contribute	
Challenged a group member	
Summarised a group member's ideas	
Clarified somebody in their group's ideas	
Built on somebody else's ideas	
Changed their mind	
Came to a shared agreement	

Fed in Facts

Instead of feeding in 'facts' on pieces of paper for students to read, you could feed different pictures or objects into the discussion. For example, if students are discussing what the setting for a story could be, you could feed in different items related to different settings to inspire them. For example, a flip flop or spade might lead to a discussion about the beach as a potential setting.

Similarly, to work on inference skills when discussing a particular book, you could feed in different pictures or objects related to the story with overarching questions to discuss. For example, how could the characters in the story have used these objects? How might they have helped them?

In maths, present students with a simple equation (for example, $1 + _ = 4$). Then feed in different concrete manipulatives and ask students to discuss how a particular resource could be used to solve the equation, stopping regularly to share different groups' ideas with the whole class.

Science - Parts of a plant, using picture instead of written facts.

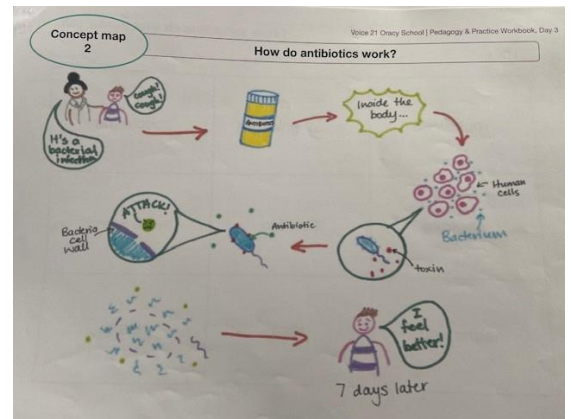
Follow the link to see the children using Fed in Facts:

<https://www.nethertoninfants.co.uk/parts-of-a-plant/>



Concept Maps

Create a concept map with the children, add pictures, text or actions. This is a great way to learn new vocabulary. Once the children have learnt this, they could perform this/teach this to others.



Talking Points

Present the children with a question or statement. For example, 'You will never regret being kind'. The encourage the children to use stem sentences in discussion for example 'I believe that...'

Who would...?

...make the best president?

...you most like to be friends with?

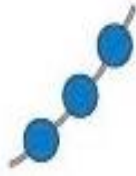
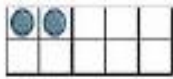
...you trust with your life?

...you trust with your secret?



Odd one out...

Discussion activity using different strategies.



<u>9</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>25</u>	<u>43</u>

Back-to-Back

Children work in pairs. One person is the instructor; they will have an image that they need to describe to their partner. Their partner will draw the picture, following their partners instructions.

What is the link?

Discussion activity using different strategies.



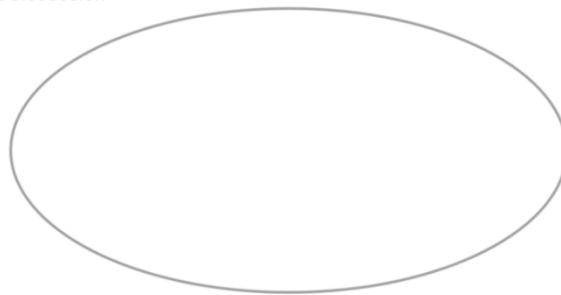
Make Talk Visible

Children sometimes struggle to analyse and reflect on talk in the classroom because they can't 'see' it. The following activities help children to reflect on their discussions and ensure that everyone makes a contribution.

Harkness Discussion

The Harkness Tracker is a tool for tracking students' participation during a Harkness discussion. But it is also a great way of tracking students' contributions during any kind of discussion.

HARKNESS DISCUSSION



Observer's key:

?	Asks a clarifying, probing or challenging question	→	Instigates a new line of conversation
+	Introduces evidence from the text	C	Builds consensus
!	Adds an insight to build on the discussion		
∞	Makes meaningful connections		

Talk Tokens

Provide children with 'talk tokens' to help them with their contribution during discussions on a question such as "What does belonging mean to you?" Give each child a set number of tokens to 'spend' during this discussion. Once their tokens have run out they cannot make any more contributions. This helps to regulate children that tend to dominate a discussion whilst providing quieter students with an incentive to join in.



Wool

Wool is another excellent tool to help students follow the thread of a conversation or discussion. The instigator of the discussion holds onto the initial strand and passes the ball to the next person when they speak, who then holds onto a section of the wool before passing it on again. This provides children with a visual map of their discussion, so they can monitor how the discussions progressed, as well as who made the most and least contributions.

Lego

Lego bricks can help to visualise the concept of building on someone's idea in discussion. Younger children can struggle to understand that their contributions to a discussion to link to the previous person's idea. Each child in a discussion contributes a brick to a tower when they correctly build on someone's else's idea. New lines of enquiry are represented by new towers. Reflecting on the height and numbers of towers is a useful tool to analyse a discussion.



Reflect on Talk

Encourage your pupils to reflect on their own participation in oracy sessions, as well as providing feedback on what they say and how they say it.

Children could reflect using these statements:

- I talked in a group today

- I talked to the whole class

- I found it hard to talk

- We decided together

- We could not agree