

Welcome to our termly Learning Newsletter where we seek to share some of the initiatives and strategies we use in school so you might best support your child in their education, in order to benefit your child and further enhance their educational experiences in the long term.

Oracy - What is it?

"The ability to express oneself fluently and grammatically in speech."

Oracy increases engagement in learning. Learning is rich and enjoyable when students bring their own voices and experiences to school life.

Oracy fosters wellbeing and confidence.

Oracy enhances employability.



Oral language interventions are based on the idea that comprehension and reading skills benefit from explicit discussion of either content or processes of learning, or both, oral language interventions aim to support learners' use of vocabulary, articulation of ideas and spoken expression.

Oral language approaches might include:

- targeted reading aloud and book discussion with young children;
- explicitly extending pupils' spoken vocabulary;
- the use of structured questioning to develop reading comprehension; and
- the use of purposeful, curriculum-focused, dialogue and interaction.

At school, teachers will emphasise that talk matters: both in its own right and because of its impact on other aspects of learning.

We're working on 'high quality talk' being well-structured and guided by teachers. So instead of saying "Talk with the person next to you...", we might first establish clear expectations around participation, as well as prompting pupils to reflect on the quality of their discussions and whether all group members were able to contribute effectively. We may ask them to form arguments, decide if something is true or false and justify their reasoning, ask them to make links with another topic for example.

Accountable talk is a useful framework to ensure talk is high quality, and emphasises how talk can be subject specific. Accountable talk is an intentional open-ended conversation where participants listen, add on to each other's comments, and use clarifying questions to ensure understanding. It allows for richer and deeper conversations beyond surface-level thinking. In debate or classroom discussions, accountable talk involves sharing ideas or opinions, supporting them with evidence, and maintaining a polite and safe speaking environment.

Teachers can support students by modelling high quality talk, for example including key vocabulary and metacognitive reflection (the practice of being aware of one's own thinking and then voicing the thoughts with the students).

How can you impact on oracy at home?

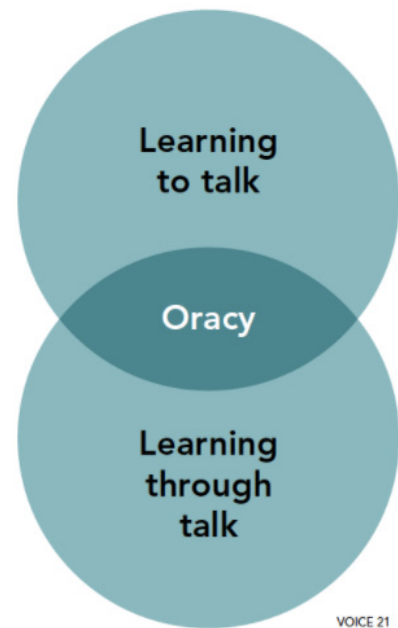
Engage in shared reading sessions with your child.

Choose books that challenge their current reading level to read aloud. ...

Foster meaningful conversations. During shared moments like traveling home from school or while enjoying a group meal. ...

Make it a goal to learn 5 new words a week and use them in conversation together

Offer 'ways in' to conversations, telephone calls, ways of dealing with situations. Talk about them and rehearse them beforehand to build confidence.



Reading Plus

Reading Plus is an adaptive literacy programme that improves fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, stamina, and motivation.

It is an adaptive reading intervention program designed to improve reading comprehension and speed up literacy acquisition across all grades. We use it in Reading lessons in the English Curriculum throughout Years 7, 8 and 9.

Whilst addressing areas for individual development, it offers access to a breadth of fiction and non-fiction texts that expand pupils' vocabulary and understanding of the world.

We'd be delighted if you'd encourage its use at home and then use it as a springboard for discussion in the home.

Pupils have access to the programme via the internet and all know their own login details.
