APPROACH TO **ORACY**

ACCOMPLISH

Oracy is the ability to communicate effectively through spoken language and it is *"the art of reasoned discussion"* (Neil Mercer). Oracy teaching and learning should provide children with the opportunities to develop in their ability to articulate their ideas appropriately, with confidence, and careful articulation, across the curriculum.

Lifelong skills

Autonomy

Communication

Social engagement

Self-worth

Agency

Identity

At Accomplish Multi-Academy Trust schools, we recognise that all children should be taught in established dialogic climates, where they are constantly learning and developing knowledge and skills in the **2 main aspects of oracy**:

Learning to talk and **learning through talk**
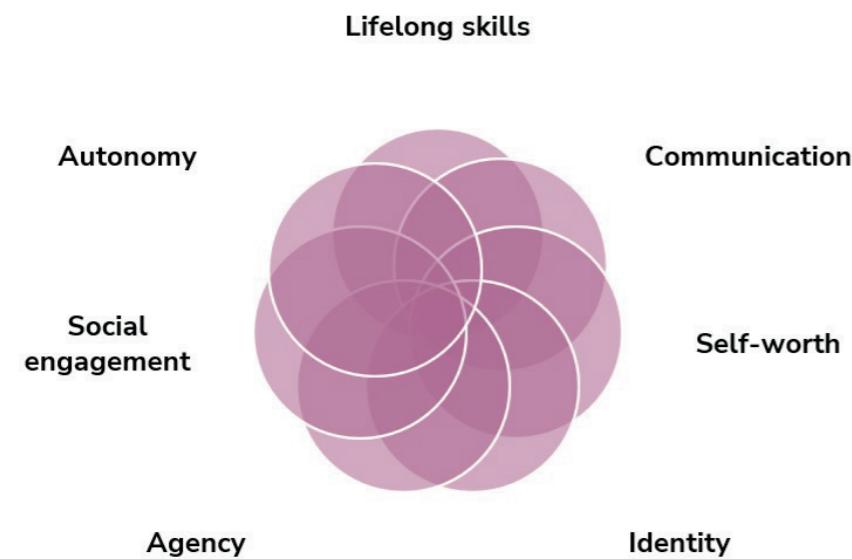
Learning to talk

- Oracy education

- Developing children's spoken language skills through a specific progressive continuum

- Understanding talk as a social function

Learning through talk

- Using talk effectively across all curriculum subjects.

- Dialogic teaching

- The understanding that good quality talk across every subject transpires into better writing, better thinking and better understanding of all key concepts *(Peter Hyman, School 21)*

Oracy matters because

- all children have a voice, and use it to participate more and more effectively over time, supporting wellbeing and confidence;

- it underpins literacy and vocabulary acquisition;

- all children can use speaking and listening to explore their understanding and learn more;

- it allows children to become better at reasoning, both on their own and with others;

- it improves academic outcomes and attainment in all subjects;

- it develops citizenship and agency;

- **it is a lifelong skill, ensuring that young people thrive beyond school.**

At Accomplish we ensure that dialogic teaching climates are the norm so that children continually develop their use of talk across the curriculum. **We believe that excellent oracy skills enable our children to be ready for their future.**

Simultaneously, there should be numerous opportunities to teach and learn spoken language "oracy" skills within every classroom, so that children are well-equipped to speak for a range of purposes and audiences by the time they leave their primary school education and beyond

Teachers ensure they create a dialogic teaching climate through developing both **learning to talk** and **learning through talk** in the following ways

Learning to talk

Developing children's spoken language skills

Oracy education

Learning through talk

Using talk effectively for teaching and learning

Dialogic teaching
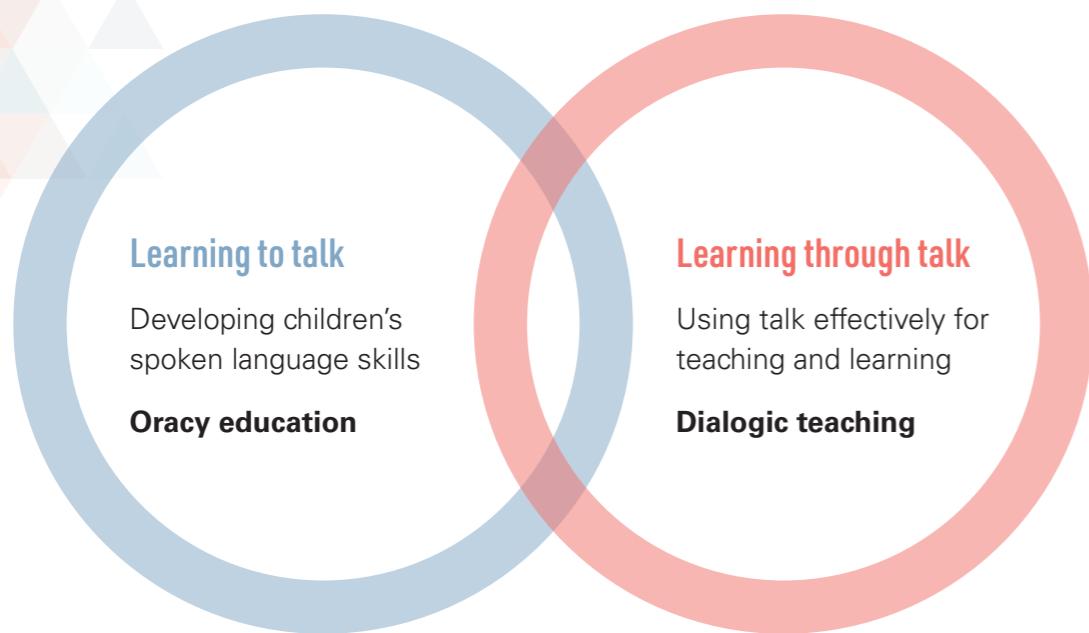
Learning to talk (Oracy education)

1. Establishing speaking and listening conventions for discussions.

2. Following an oracy skills progression framework.

3. Using a speaking toolkit to frame talk.

4. Giving oracy its **own curriculum time** as well as embedding it through each subject.

5. Explicitly teaching speaking and listening across a range of social situations.

6. Making time for **talking about talk.**

Learning through talk (Dialogic teaching)

1. Speaking and listening is part of every subject.

2. Whole class discussions and/or small group discussions included within every lesson.

3. **Talk-partner** work prioritised in every lesson.

4. Teachers **facilitate talk** opportunities with children through extending and questioning.

5. **Talking is used for assessment** in all subjects.

6. **Vocabulary is voiced** in all subjects.

Learning to talk (Oracy Education)

1. Establishing Speaking and Listening Conventions/Ground rules

"The first step is to create, with each class, a set of ground rules for talk which will provide a supportive basis for all their discussions" – Neil Mercer

First and foremost, establishing age-appropriate ground rules for speaking and listening is necessary. The conditions need to be created for high quality discussions to effectively take place; this is paramount to achieve consistency. This needs to be a whole-school approach, although these may be simpler in younger year groups.

These should be established:

- As a whole-school
- In every class

These conventions should be organised into separate conventions for speaking and listening and should always be agreed as a collective. Whole-school speaking and listening rules could be discussed in assembly at the beginning of the year, and revisited at the beginning of each half term. Class speaking and listening rules would be decided and agreed upon in a whole-class discussion at the start of the new academic year, and revisited and referred to regularly. Both should be displayed in a central area where they can be referred to constantly.

A checklist for how to create ground rules for discussion tasks, taken from Hfl (2023) is :

☐ **Rules for speaking and listening** during collaborative talking tasks

☐ **Be positive:** we do/we are/ we will

☐ **Be clear:** what does this look like for everyone involved? (staff too!)

☐ **Be consistent:** have these on display and use them across the curriculum

☐ **Promote inclusion**

☐ **Promote collaboration and communication**

2. Following an oracy skills progression framework

The National Curriculum (NC) states that, 'Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject.' The National Curriculum recognises that 'fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects'.

Each class will follow the oracy skills progression framework within which expectation are set for speaking and listening. This is sub-divided into the following areas at appropriate levels:

- Listening and responding
- Questioning
- Oral rehearsal/Presenting
- Vocabulary
- Talking with others

This framework should be used to help formulate task-specific assessments across a range of subjects. This supports teachers to understand the level of expectation within each year group across each of the sub-divisions, many of which interlink.

This framework also interlinks the four strands from the Oracy Cambridge Framework, encompassing the Physical, Linguistic, Cognitive and Social & Emotional skills outlined below to enable success and effectiveness:

The Oracy Framework (Oracy Cambridge)

3. Speaking toolkit used to frame talk

Once the conditions for effective discussions have been implemented and are understood by all, we know that children may need additional support and prompting to carry out high-quality talk.

Speaking toolkits include, but are not exhaustive to, the planned implementation of:

- Sentence starters
- Sentence stems
- Verbal prompts
- Question stems and open ended questioning
- Reframing talk

Each of which plays a part in helping children to structure or extend their responses as necessary.

Teachers plan these effectively prior to lessons to support and scaffold children with their talk. By planning several plausible answers, teachers give children opportunities to develop their own views on subjects and challenge others. Teachers model the reframing of children's talk and set high expectations using the above toolkit so that children become accustomed to different ways in which to frame their spoken language including questions.

Physical

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

Body language
- Gesture & posture
- Facial expression & eye contact

Linguistic

Vocabulary
- Appropriate vocabulary choice

Language
- Register
- Grammar

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

Cognitive

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

Structure
- Structure & organisation of talk

Clarifying & summarising
- Seeking information & clarification through questions/ing
- Summarising

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

Social & Emotional

Working with others
- Guiding or managing interactions
- Turn-taking

Listening & responding
- Listening actively & responding appropriately

Confidence in speaking
- Self assurance
- Liveliness & flair

Audience awareness
- Taking account of level of understanding of the audience

Speaking and listening sentence stems are provided in each year group to support talk outcomes. These are modelled by all teaching staff and displayed within the classroom for reference. This encourages children to practise using and reframing talk in a similar way, so that over time their talk progresses.

To encourage active speaking and listening, teachers incorporate the toolkit into a wide range of strategies to allow all children to actively participate, such as:

ABC (Alex Quigley, Closing the Vocabulary Gap)
Add to, Build Upon, Challenge

AGREE

I would argue the same thing because ...

The reason I agree with this is ...

That is an interesting point because ...

BUILD

I agree with ... but would like to add ...

That is a good argument but I need to add...

Building on what ... said ....

CHALLENGE

I don't think ... is right because ...

I would like to challenge this because ...

My opinion is different because ...

Talking towers, using bricks to create a tower. Children add their brick to the tower when they speak. This ensures everyone participates in the talk, whilst encouraging turn-taking. Therefore, talk is focussed, with children focussing on listening as well as speaking, so that they know what other children have said as well.

Talk groupings. Different arrangements of groups are suited to different types of talk, depending on the intended outcome. We consider these options when we invite children to talk:

Pairs
Two students talking together

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

Traverse
Pupils stand in two parallel lines opposite a speaking partner
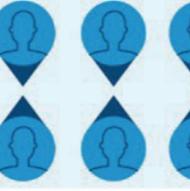
Nest
Students stand apart and whisper their ideas to themselves

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

Talk tactics (Voice 21) allow children to think strategically about their contributions towards group talk, based on a specific role which they are given within the group: Instigator, prober, challenger, clarifier, summariser or builder. See below:

Talk Tactics Talk tactics encourage students to think strategically about their contributions to group talk

Instigate
Present an idea or open up a new line of enquiry
Start by saying:
− I would like to start by saying…
− I think….
− We haven't yet talked about…

Probe
Dig deeper, ask for evidence or justification of ideas
Start by saying:
− Why do you think…?
− What evidence do you have to support X idea?
− Could you provide an example?

Challenge
Disagree or present an alternative argument
Start by saying:
− I disagree because…
− To challenge you X, I think…
− I understand your point of view, but have you thought about…?

Clarify
Asking questions to make things clearer and check your understanding
Start by saying:
− So are you saying…?
− Does that mean…?
− Can you clarify what you mean by?

Summarise
Identify and recap the main ideas
Start by saying:
− So far we have talked about…
− The main points raised today were…
− Our discussion focused on…

Build
Develop, add to or elaborate on an idea.
Start by saying:
− Building on X's idea…
− I agree and would like to add…
− X's idea made me think…

Ultimately it is our priority to engage all children in talking. As Dan Nichols states: "If we let them off, we let them down." Through encouragement and scaffolding and providing talk opportunities through many different strategies, children feel **successful** and ready for lifelong learning.

4. Giving oracy its own curriculum time as well as embedding it through each subject

Time must be given to oracy as a subject development in its own right, so that children can be introduced to age-appropriate knowledge and skills (linked to the skills progression framework). This should always be discussion based with time to practise and embed the aim of the oracy objective. This can be done formally or informally. Each class should aim to have at least one oracy skills-based session every fortnight.

Our aim is always to raise children's awareness of the power of talk and their **voice being voiced;** teachers are the facilitators enabling children to understand this power and valuing it with them, understanding the unique power that everyone possesses through talk. This will then enable children to use that power for language learning in every subject, allowing them to enhance their curriculum learning through talk.

Learning to talk (Oracy Education)

5. Explicitly teach speaking and listening skills across a range of social situations.

We recognise that talk is a lifelong skill, therefore a key priority is raising children's awareness of talk in its social context. As aforementioned, the power of talk is unsurmountable; speaking allows children to entertain, inform, persuade or discuss for a wide range of purposes and audiences. Children are given opportunities to create talk for different purposes e.g. speeches, presentations, debates. It is also paramount that children are taught how to actively listen and engage with others' ideas. We teach children to reason together and to ultimately, **strive for consensus.**

Considerations need to be centred around the "why". Are we speaking and listening to:

- Emotively respond to someone?
- Ask someone something?
- Question other people's contributions?
- Just to participate and add our own suggestion?
- Build upon someone else's idea?
- Agree or disagree?
- Reframe and summarise the main points?

"A powerful vehicle for learning across the curriculum. Learning in a school context is an inherently social activity and talk is a powerful medium for understanding."

Rupert Knight

Pupil agency is continually enhanced by shared discussions, both within class and wider school networks, for example within Junior leadership meetings, school council meetings, librarian meetings where ideas are contributed and discussed with others. Every classroom is fully democratic; this is demonstrated through voting and consideration of everyone's opinions. This encourages children to think about the British Values of democracy work in their own social context, whilst developing their skills and knowledge for their life beyond primary school.

Oracy, alongside PSHE, combine to develop social playground talk. Teaching children how to approach others for play, agree or disagree, turn-take and ultimately compromise is crucial within a school environment.

Children are taught to ask their own questions, considering the complexity of their question and how these can deepen understanding using the continuum:
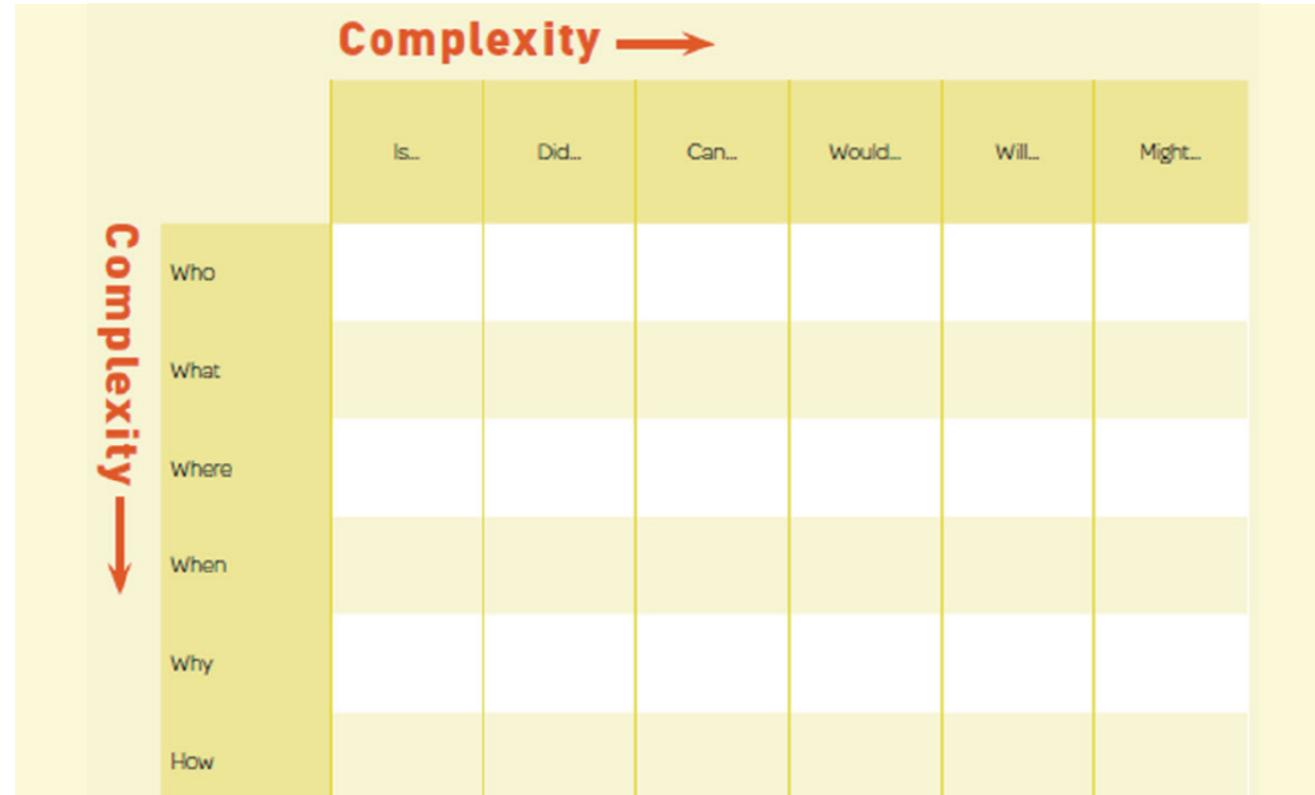
6. Time is made for talking about talk.

Exploratory talk is a crucial part of learning. We realise that by learning how to reason together, children become better at reasoning alone (Neil Mercer).

Consequently, reflecting upon and discussing talk is a highly significant aspect of our oracy offer within Accomplish MAT. Exploratory talk allows children to develop their self-awareness of talk, enriching the quality of talk and ensuring bad habits are eliminated. As facilitators, teaching staff can continually press children to elaborate on this by 'talking about talk' in order to develop the group and individual reasoning.

We find ways to make each child feel successful with their talking about talk. We can make it easy for them to contribute by making this learning an integral part of all learning; they are regularly invited to discuss talk and be involved in these discussions.

"Talking about talk" discussions should focus on the quality of classroom discussions and interactions. Some useful questions and sentence stems are listed:

"What makes a good discussion?"

"What makes a bad discussion?"

"What could we do if we disagree?"

"Who asked a great question today?"

"Did everyone participate today?"

"Did someone else encourage you to join in today? How?"

"Did you encourage someone else to participate today? How?"

"Who thinks they could have contributed further today?"

"What did you learn from listening to a peer/teacher today?"

"Did everyone follow our ground rules? If not, which ones were broken?"

I talked in a group today and it felt…

I found it hard to talk today because…

We decided together that…

We could not agree on…

Discussing talk and discussions in this way develop children's meta-awareness of talk. It is important that children are involved in regular informal discussions about their talk as a whole-school, and within classes, every so often to 'check in' on their own progress.

Learning through talk (Dialogic teaching)

> *"Dialogic teaching is both talk and more than talk, it enacts a distinctively dialogic stance on knowledge, learning, social relations and education itself."*
>
> Robin Alexander

1. Speaking and listening is part of every subject

"Speaking and listening are at the heart of all language development. They are foundational for reading and writing, whilst proving essential for thinking and communication. Teaching should focus on pupils' language development, particularly their expressive language, which will also support their writing. Speaking and listening can be used to model and develop expressive and receptive language." EEF 2021: 13

In the Early Years we know "The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of language and development" - EYFS Framework 2023. Within language-rich environments, children flourish. By providing language everywhere, children will be ready for learning: visually, physically and emotionally. Quality interactions between teachers and children allow these to further develop and be enhanced, alongside a stimulating learning environment which provokes and inspires.

At Accomplish MAT schools, all year groups are influenced by the EYFS language-rich environments. All classrooms provide interactive, engaging learning where children are encouraged to talk, share ideas, as well as be provoked and inspired by the curriculum and participate in discussions about all subjects.

Oral rehearsal is key to all learning, particularly grammar and writing. We understand the power of speaking ideas aloud before writing, particularly having the opportunity to share ideas with teachers and peers. Allowing children to play around with language verbally, allows them to develop an understanding of the inter-relationship between talking, reading and writing.

Dialogic talk allows children to open up the author's capacity to make linguistic choices and allows the transfer of learning. Teachers asking open-ended questions that are orientated towards particular responses, opens up children's thinking and therefore develops the way that they focus their own writing.

Grammar teaching should be centred around talk because grammar is a choice. It's important for children to orally rehearse ideas so that they understand how their choices impact the reader "why it matters". Children always need to understand the affect of what they are doing, and they can only do this if they have time to discuss and hear their ideas read aloud. Sharing them with a peer and having open discussions about writing is therefore paramount. Teachers are also crucial here, and should ask children informal questions about writing, as well as formal ones, to develop children's understanding over time. To do so, teachers should always open up discussions about writing using grammatical terminology. We can only expect children to develop a metalinguistic understanding if they are exposed to the terminology they need.

Questions teachers use to facilitating talk about writing:

"How's it going?"

"Are you enjoying this?"

"Why did you choose to add that there?"

"How does it change if you move that… to the front…?"

"What is the effect of putting the subject after the verb?"

"Can you visualise this, what language helps you to paint a picture in your head?"

Perhaps the greatest impact spoken language will have on children's writing will not be through direct, teacher-planned activities; instead, it will come from the slow accumulation of language experience. Through conversation with peers and adults, children will encounter words, phrases and ideas that will allow them to express their ideas in writing. (James Clements 2022)

Useful apps for developing oral rehearsal and discussion:

Seesaw,

2. Whole class discussions and/or small group discussions included within every lesson.

Al Adeimi & O'Connor (2021) found that students aged 9-12 wrote better, more persuasive essays when teachers regularly organised dialogic whole-class discussions.

Understanding that talk is at the centre of language development, teachers prioritise discussions for all learners. Talk is the foundational element of all literacy, reading, writing and all learning, and it is particularly beneficial for low attainers and disadvantaged learners. Opportunities for discussion need to be provided in every lesson.

Discussion comes in so many forms; the structure and variety of planned opportunities is vital. Importantly, teachers model the talk that will frame, support and extend children's talk, allowing them to think, speak and express themselves across different areas of learning.

We know that conversations are the ideal context for the development of children's language and thinking (EEF:2021) - these can be used to confirm understanding or feelings, elaborate and extend knowledge. There are several specific techniques, as outlined by EEF, that staff can adopt to implicitly reinforce and enhance children's language and communication development. As well as this, there are several approached that consolidate, extend and promote thinking as well as supporting self-regulation practise.

These include: **commenting, reflecting, extending, imagining and modelling your thinking.**

Crucially, with any collaborative discussion, the importance of listening is reinforced.

The following should be considered when using a collaborative learning approach:

- Tasks need to be designed carefully so that working together is effective and efficient otherwise some pupils will struggle to participate or will try to work on their own.

- Competition between groups can be used to support pupils in working together more effectively, though over-use of competition can focus learners on the competition rather than succeeding in their learning, so it must be used cautiously.

- Ensure that all pupils, particularly pupils with low prior attainment, are supported to fully participate and articulate their thinking in collaborative tasks to ensure they benefit fully.

- Small groups of three to five pupils with shared responsibility for a task tends to be the most successful structure.

- Professional development may be needed to support effective use of these strategies. **EEF 2021: 14**

3. Talk-partner work prioritised in every lesson

From the start of the RWI programme in EYFS, TTYP (Talk to your partner) signal are embedded. This enables frequent, structured discussions to flow naturally. Children become used to working in paired, group and whole-class discussions using TTYP routines as part of this.

TTYP are signalled by all teachers which encourage all children to better formulate their thoughts by including short contained paired discussions.

Teachers are careful to design their questions for these sessions to ensure maximum efficiency and accountability. Questioning should optimize whole class participation.

4. Teachers are key to facilitating talk opportunities with children through extending and questioning.

We know from the above, the importance of high quality classroom discussion and children need to be provided regular opportunities to do so, both as part of a whole-school or class, or in small group work.

Teachers facilitate this talk through careful planning; teaching staff have a key responsibility to increase the quantity and quality of classroom talk. They can do so by:

- asking open questions, such as questions that require pupils to explain, reason, or argue;

- probing with follow-up questions that require pupils to expand on their answers;

- building on pupils' responses to move the dialogue forward;

- encouraging pupils to ask their own questions;

- ensuring every pupil has opportunities to articulate their ideas and be listened to;

- creating a classroom culture that encourages dialogue (for example, teaching pupils to listen when others are speaking); and

- incorporating opportunities for dialogue into lesson plans and classroom activities. **EEF 2021: 13**

Interactive dialogue is promoted by teachers through:

- talks less and gives students opportunities to take long turns when talking;

- encourages students to discuss and question each other's ideas;

- avoids always judging students' contributions

- encourages students to ask questions and share their thoughts and misunderstandings;

- expects students to justify their ideas with reasons.

Teachers are encouraged to think about the purpose of the speaking and listening opportunities that allow children to learn through talk.

Considerations needs to be made for:

Why are the students talking?
- The students are talking because…
- The students are talking to...

How are the students talking?
- The students are talking…
- I liked the way that they are…
- I was interested that…

Who is talking and to whom?
- I noticed that…

(Rupert Knight, Classroom Talk in Practice)

**Talking is used for assessment in all subject**

Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessment to check children's understanding. These include: questioning, talk like an expert, convince me, critiquing, self and peer assessment.

At Accomplish MAT schools we expect children to own their learning and be fully involved in evaluating their successes as well as identifying areas for development.

We train children to evaluate by constantly reflecting on the why, seeing themselves as the first markers and audience for their learning; their peers also assess work with them to strengthen the collaborative learning process.

If working in partners, children should discuss each piece of work in turn. Teachers may find it useful to train pupils to place one book on top of another so that children are fully focused on evaluating one piece of work at a time.

Learning through talk (Dialogic teaching)

Templates can be provided such as below to encourage children to have deep and meaningful conversations about their learning:
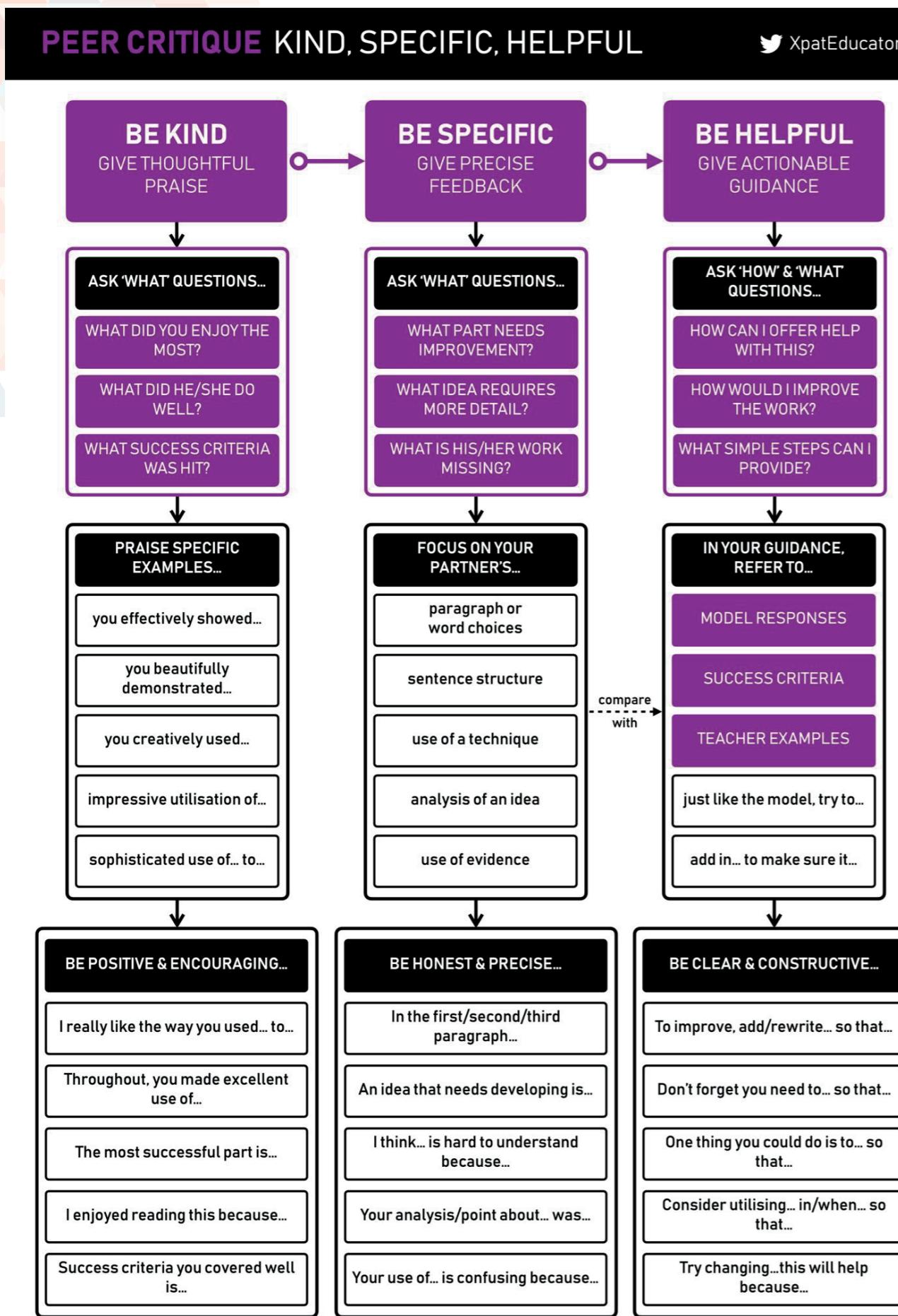
Critique example.
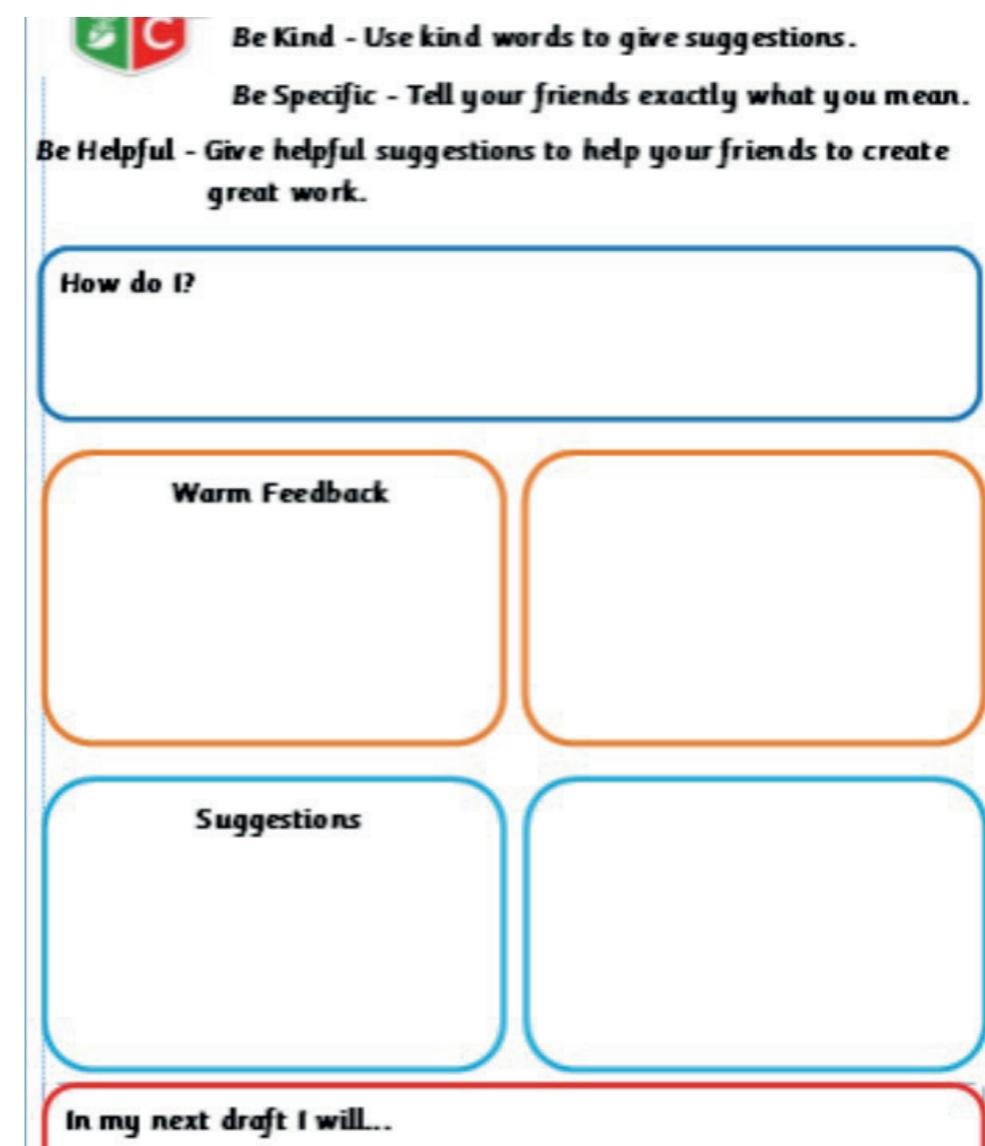
Spoken assessments can also be recorded using apps such as Seesaw, where a learning record can be kept; children can take accountability for recording their understanding and critiques on these apps. These can also be used to listen back to speaking so that children can assess the clarity of their talk against the progressive skills framework.

5. Vocabulary is voiced in all subjects.

At Accomplish MAT schools, language and vocabulary are explicitly developed across all subjects. Teachers select this accordingly and subject leads ensure this is progressively mapped out across the school through unit overviews. Vocabulary is progressive and definitions are clear, linked to the themed units of learning or reading. Children's vocabulary is extended through repeated exposure of these words as well as providing opportunities for children to practise using these in their learning in different contexts. Teachers needs to provide the opportunities for children to actively use new vocabulary in class.

Vocabulary development is done in two ways (EEF 2021):

1. **Explicit teaching of new vocabulary**

2. **Exposing children to a language-rich learning environment**

We recognise that the learning environment acts as another teacher, showcasing the key learning and vocabulary that is currently being taught. **Language around the classroom is always relevant to current learning.**

Early Years and KS1 children should be exposed to key vocabulary further in their continuous provision: such as small world play, role play and construction activities.

Across KS2, we encourage teachers to make cross-curricular links with vocabulary where possible so that vocabulary links to multiple subjects and contexts, therefore the knowledge is deepened. Vocabulary is retrieved and built upon throughout each year, before being developed further in the next year.

Voicing vocabulary (Voice 21 impact report 2022-23) was shown to have a highly positive impact creating above average reading scores. Voicing and repeating new words can be done in many different ways. Sing it or speak it, songs and chants are highly beneficial (Lawsone Adams et al. 2022) Teachers use My turn Your Turn (MTYT) to articulate new vocabulary and ensure words are enunciated with accuracy. Dual-coding strategies such as showing or drawing pictures to help represent new words is also vital learning, especially for children with SEND needs. The aim is always to make vocabulary meaningful and memorable for children. Building up a range of vocabulary is a priority for all pupils, but especially in KS2 (EEF 2021) it is often particularly beneficial fr children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and those who have had limited exposure to the English language outside of school.

When pre-teaching and discussing new words, teachers will find Beck & McKeown's tiers of vocabulary useful:

Adapted from Beck & McKeown 1995.

Tier 3
Less common topic specific words
e.g. *photosynthesis, denominator*

Tier 2
Words that appear frequently across several topics e.g. *emerge, peculiar*

Tier 1
Everyday words familiar to most children e.g. *walk, chair*
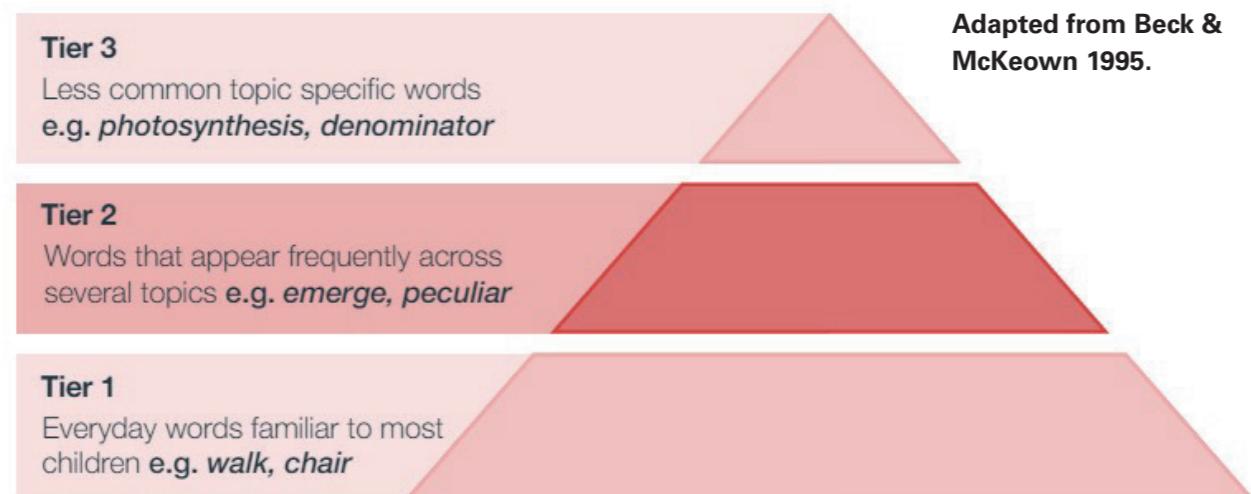
Explicit teaching usually best focusses on tier 2 words; these words can be considered challenging but they can be focussed on across a variety of contexts across the curriculum, to be engage children in their meanings.

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