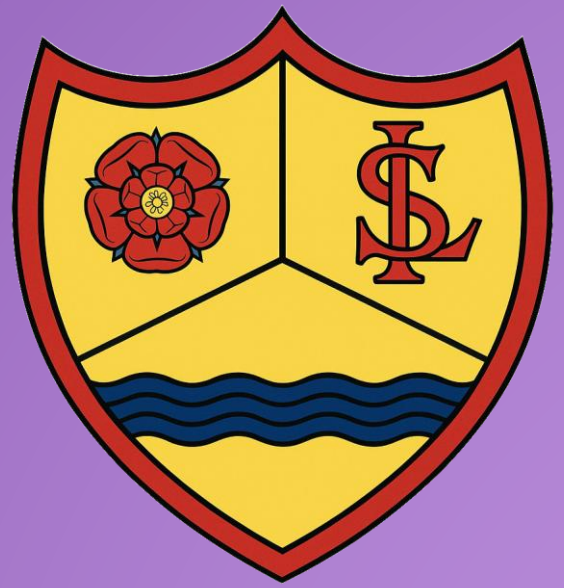
Embedding Oracy with a Focus on English as an Additional Language

Cameron Elliott
Oracy Lead

Paula Duckworth
Headteacher





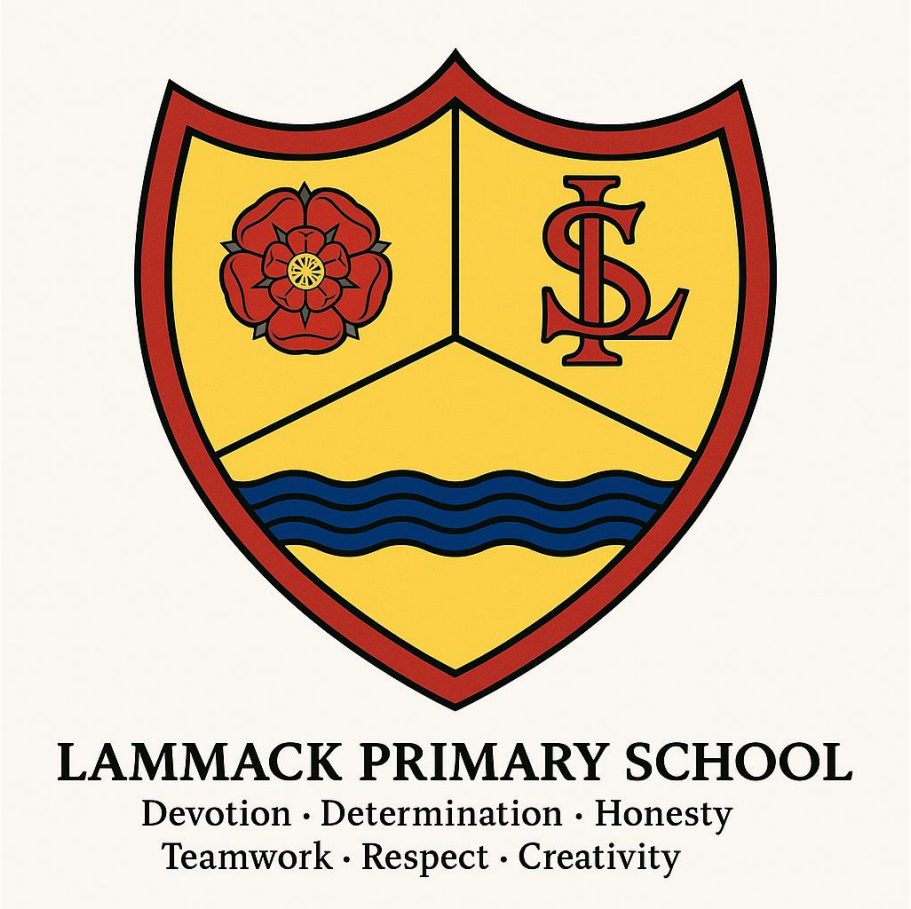
Session Aims

- **Sharing Lammack Primary School's journey towards embedding a whole-school culture of oracy in an EAL rich context.**

- **Explore how our explicit oracy teaching has increased children's confidence, engagement and access to learning.**

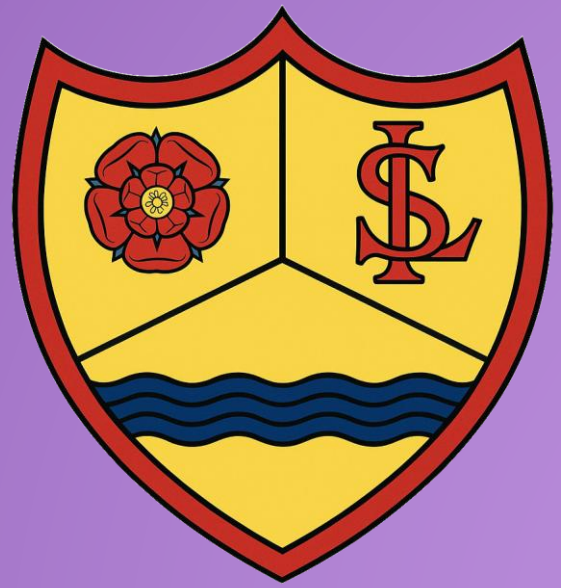
- **Share practical strategies that we implemented to support our EAL children.**

Lammack Primary School's Context



- A community primary school in Blackburn, serving a diverse community, predominantly of Indian and Pakistani heritage.
- The majority of our pupils speak English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- A large and growing school, currently with 570 pupils on roll.
- We are expanding to a capacity of 630 pupils over the next three years.

Lammack's Oracy Journey





Discussion Point

What can prevent EAL learners from fully participating in classroom talk?

2 minutes



Pair

Sentence Stems:

- One barrier might be _____.
- EAL learners may find it difficult to participate when _____.
- This could affect classroom talk because _____.

What can prevent EAL learners from fully participating in classroom talk?

- Many of our children do not speak English at home.
- Children can have limited technical vocabulary.
- Some children do not know how to structure their talk.
- Children shy away from public speaking due to a fear of making mistakes.
- EAL learners may use filler words such as ‘thingy’ or make grammatical errors, such as saying ‘off the lights’.



The challenge is not simply getting pupils to talk more.

It is creating the conditions in which every pupil can participate successfully.

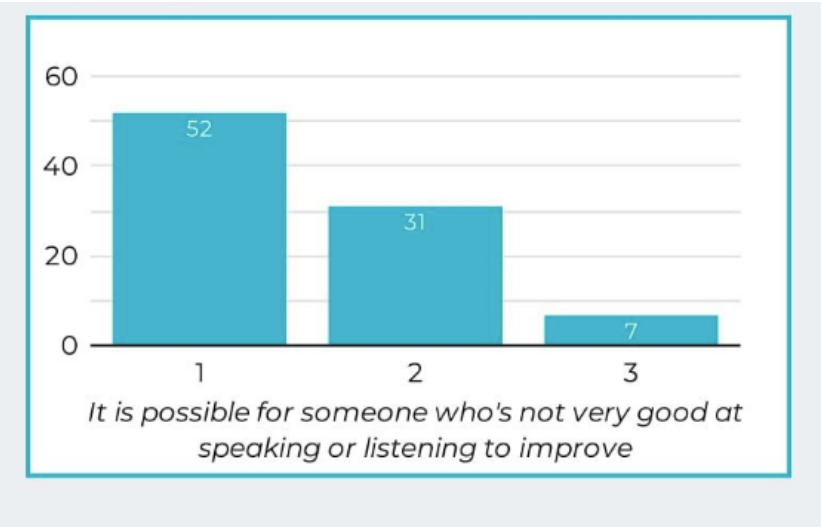
Starting Point

- Lammack children were described as ‘passive learners’ by Ofsted inspectors during lesson time.
- The COVID lockdown had impacted our children’s speech and vocabulary development.
- Staff believed we were already supporting our children’s oracy development effectively. We didn’t fully understand there was more to be done!

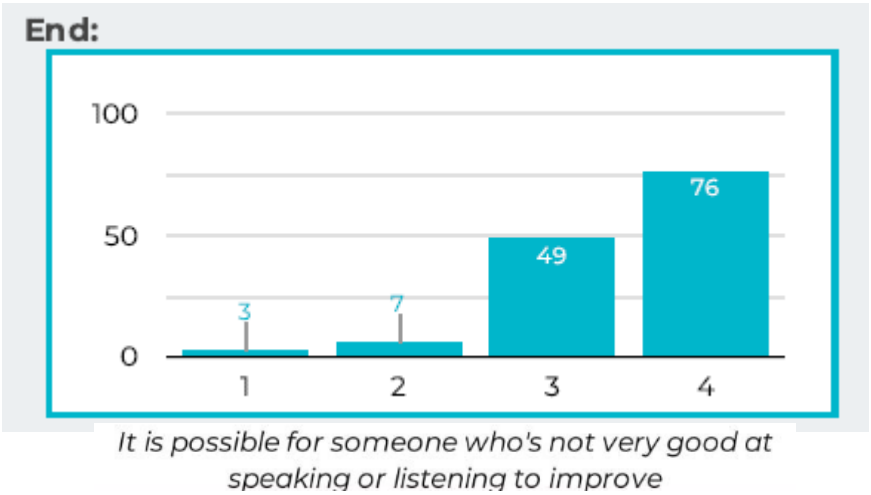


Benchmark Reports

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = agree
4 = strongly agree



At the beginning of our oracy journey, 93% of EAL children surveyed did not believe they could improve their oracy skills (Benchmark Report, 2020).



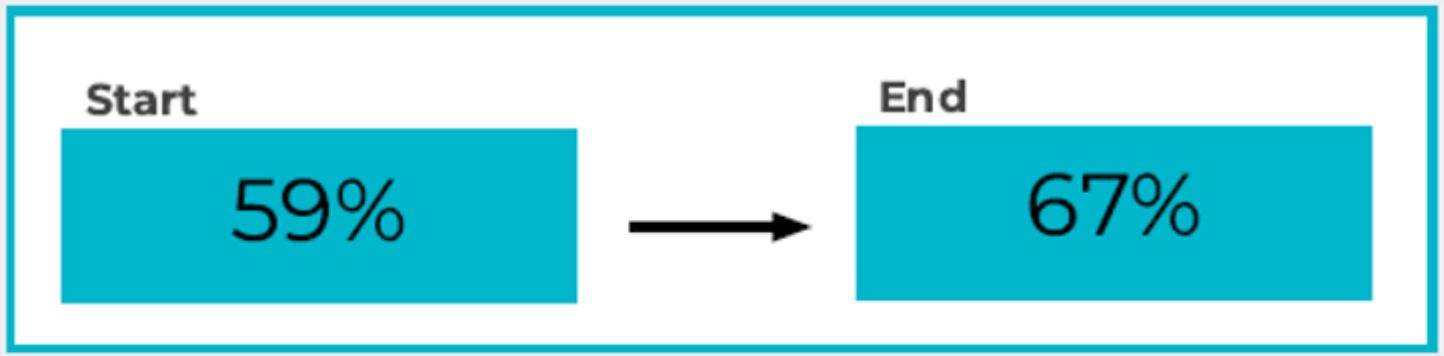
Since beginning our work with Voice 21, this perception changed with 89% of our EAL children surveyed strongly agreeing or agreeing that someone 'can improve their speaking and listening' (Benchmark Survey, Autumn, 2022).

Benchmark Reports

The percentage of teachers who are oracy confident lets you see the extent to which high quality oracy teaching is embedded throughout your school.

Oracy Confidence - in summary

Below you can see the percentage of teachers who are oracy confident (rated the statement 6 or 7) at the start and end of your current membership year.



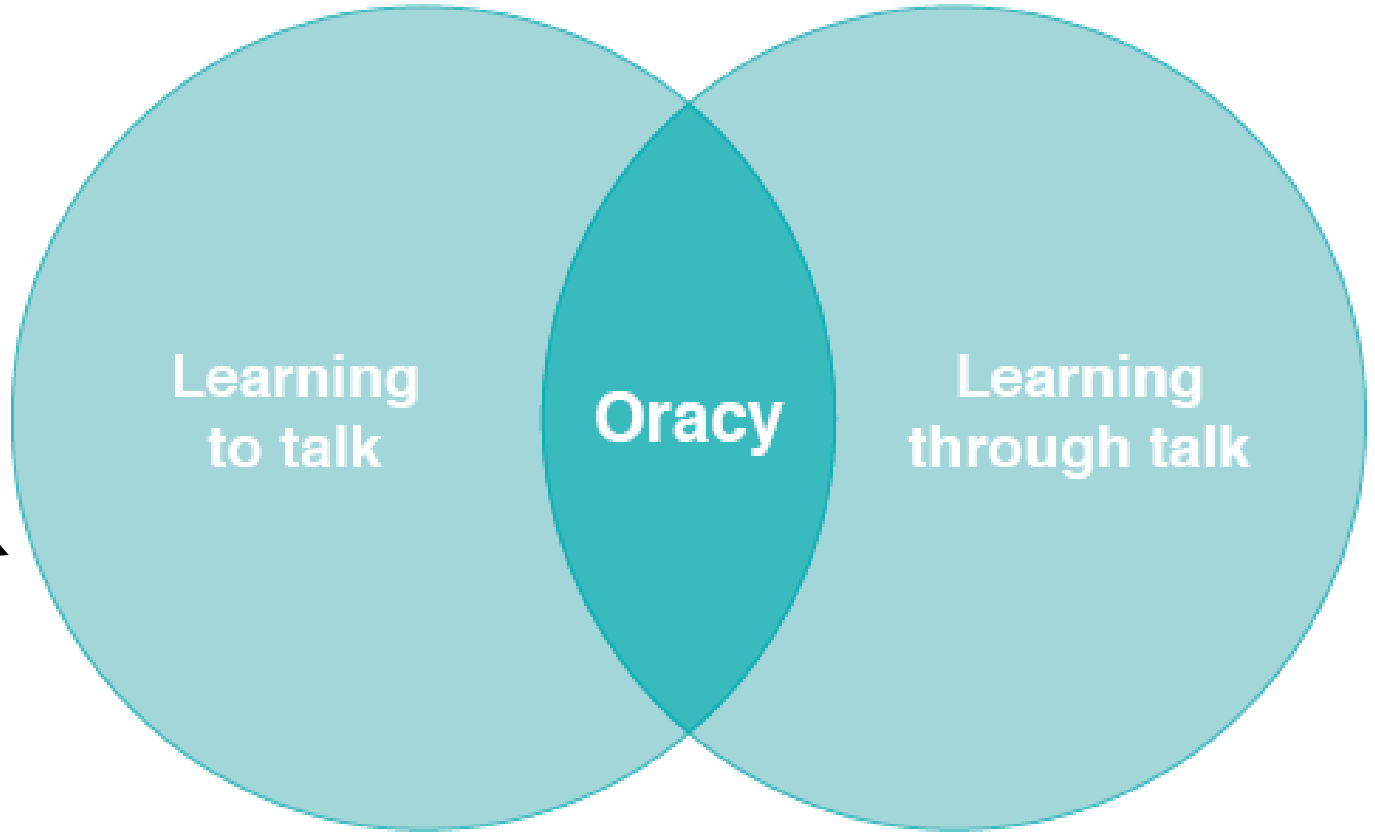
'I have the knowledge and experience I need to ensure students at my school receive a high-quality oracy education' from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Autumn 2021 to Summer 2022

ORACY CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE
voice 21
2024

Striking the Balance

Skills on the Oracy Framework (Cambridge University).



Using talk to improve thinking and understanding.

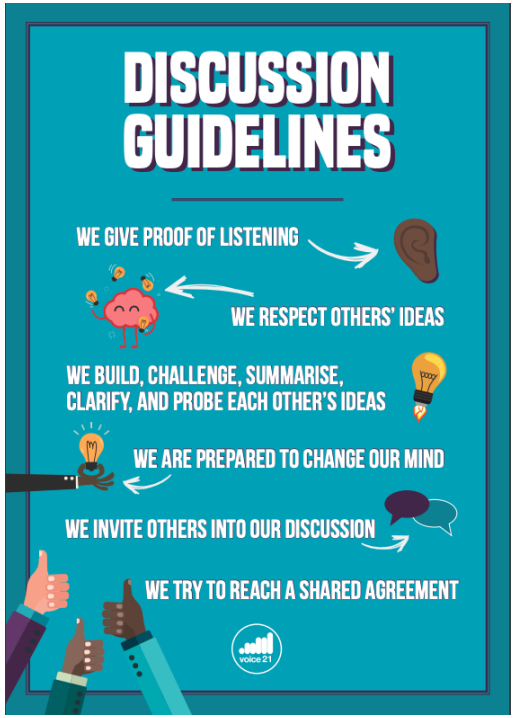
At Lammack, we want to strike the balance of learning to talk and learning through talk. This is where oracy is at its most effective. We want to equip the children with skills to develop into good orators but we also need to allow the children opportunities to apply their newly learnt skills in meaningful ways.

Introducing Talk Tactics









Thinking Time → **Nesting** → **Sentence Stems** → **Discussion Guidelines**

Think → **Rehearse** → **Scaffold** → **Share**

Introducing Talk Tactics



Thinking Time

What is it?

We deliberately pause before asking pupils to respond, giving everyone time to think about what they want to say rather than rewarding the quickest response.

What does it look like?

Pupils may think independently, gather their ideas or identify vocabulary they want to use before discussion begins.

Impact for our EAL pupils

Provides valuable processing time to retrieve vocabulary, formulate ideas and construct sentences before the additional pressure of speaking.

Introducing Talk Tactics



Nesting

What is it?

Rather than moving immediately to whole-class talk, pupils rehearse their response with increasingly wider audiences.

What does it look like?

Individual → Pair → Group → Whole class

Pupils can hear other responses, borrow useful vocabulary and improve their own contribution each time they rehearse it.

Impact for our EAL pupils

Creates a lower-stakes opportunity to practise spoken English, refine language and build confidence before speaking to a larger audience.

Introducing Talk Tactics



Sentence Stems

What are they?

Sentence stems provide the structure pupils need to participate in different types of classroom talk.

What does it look like?

"I think ___ because…"

"I agree with ___ because…"

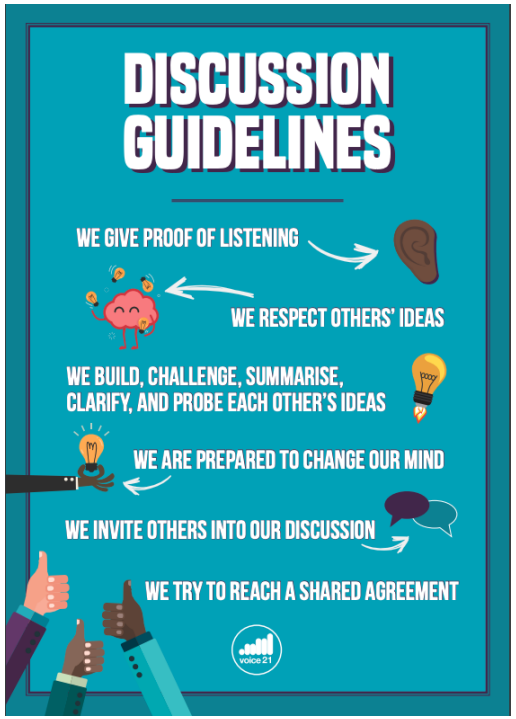
"Building on ___'s idea…"

They are explicitly modelled and used across the curriculum, with scaffolding reduced as pupils become more independent.

Impact for our EAL pupils

Children may understand a concept without yet having the English structures needed to articulate their thinking. Sentence stems provide a way into the conversation, while repeated use helps pupils internalise the language of reasoning and discussion.

Introducing Talk Tactics



Discussion Guidelines

What are they?

Shared expectations

How did we introduce them?

Each year group explored our oracy progression map, identifying the age-related oracy outcomes.

Tailored to their classes.

The children help to create them.

Impact for our EAL pupils

Pupils learn how to listen, enter a discussion, build on or challenge an idea.

Clear, consistent expectations for how to participate.

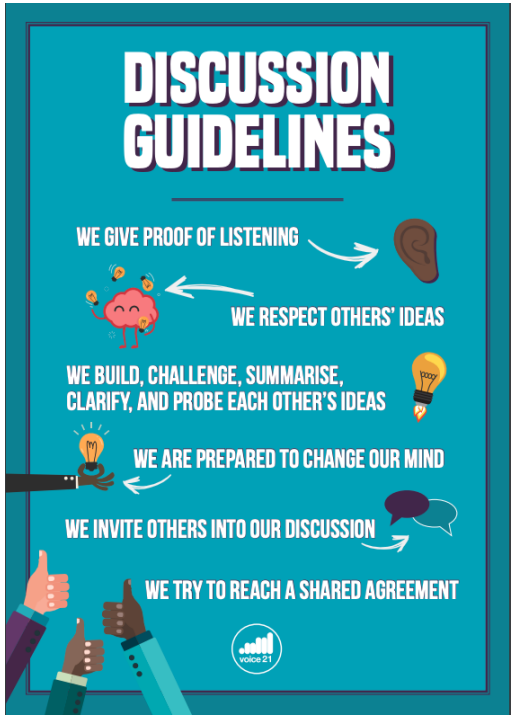
Creating a classroom culture in which every contribution is valued.

Introducing Talk Tactics









Thinking Time → **Nesting** → **Sentence Stems** → **Discussion Guidelines**

Think → **Rehearse** → **Scaffold** → **Share**

Discussion Point

How does this approach support EAL children?



30 seconds of thinking time

Discussion Point

How does this approach support EAL children? (2 minutes)



Share your ideas in your trio.

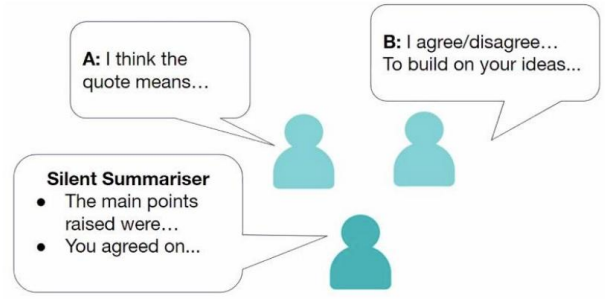
Sentence Stems:

- Who would like to share first?
- This approach supports EAL children because _____.
- A possible challenge for an EAL child might be _____.
- Building on your point, I think _____.

Other Talk Tactics

Silent Summariser

Student A and B have a discussion around a talking point while student C (the summariser) remains quiet until the discussion has finished, before summarising the key points at the end. It can be an effective way to challenge the skills of more confident and dominating speakers in a group.



Talk Detectives

Send one of your pupils on a secret 'talk detectives' mission... Get them to observe group discussions and then share their findings with the class.

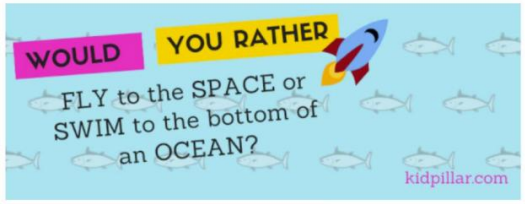


Talk detectives!
Mystery to solve: what does good oracy look like?

Physical - Are they speaking loudly and clearly? - Are they using hand gestures?	
Cognitive - Are they giving reasons for their opinions? - Are they asking questions?	
Linguistic - Are they using ambitious vocabulary?	
Social and Emotional - Are they tracking the speaker? - Are they making sure everyone gets a turn to speak?	



Would you rather _____ or _____?
I would rather _____ because _____!





Opinion Line

Give each child a sticky note and read a statement. The children should then quickly think of their answer and write reasons to explain it. Get the children to stick their notes onto the line or make the line physically and get the children to line up. If the line is physical, get the children to explain their reasons to the partner on their left and on their right.

'You can judge a person based on the clothes that they wear.'



Appraisal Projects

- **Changing our staff appraisal process communicated that oracy was our top priority as a school.**

- Opportunities to trial, observe, reflect and refine practice. Successful approaches are then shared with all of our staff.

- Many of our projects have an oracy focus.

- Structured talk gives pupils repeated opportunities to **hear, use and apply** new language.



Teaching Success Criteria

Word of the week- in context

Liaising with buddy classes to share vocab- learning from peers.

Using word association- this will allow the children to have a better understanding.

Continue with using the spelling list but also considering transcription and dictating sentences with new vocab.

Headline/Impact Goal

The impact an enriched vocabulary can have on writing.

A compelling image/quote that explains your project

VOCABULARY MATTERS

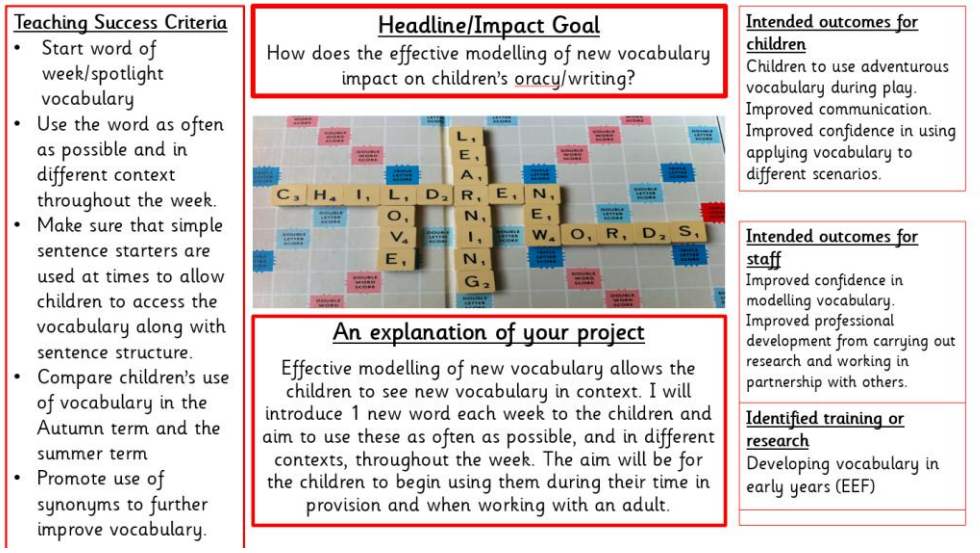
An explanation of your project (including whether this is new or a continuation from last year.

This is a continuation from last year, I am going to continue with the introduction of new vocab using my 'word of the week' and other vocab activities to introduce a diverse word bank to the children. Considering the impact vocab had last year, I would think about what tweaks and changes I can make to make it more achievable for the children and accessible. Allowing opportunities for talk to help with the writing, modeling and using explorative talk within lessons to use new and meaningful vocab.

Intended outcomes for children
Enriched vocabulary that can be seen in their writing and when using their oracy skills.

Intended outcomes for staff
Continuing on the journey of explicit teaching of vocab.

Identified training or research



Teaching Success Criteria

- Start word of week/spotlight vocabulary
- Use the word as often as possible and in different context throughout the week.
- Make sure that simple sentence starters are used at times to allow children to access the vocabulary along with sentence structure.
- Compare children's use of vocabulary in the Autumn term and the summer term
- Promote use of synonyms to further improve vocabulary.

Headline/Impact Goal

How does the effective modelling of new vocabulary impact on children's oracy/writing?

An explanation of your project

Effective modelling of new vocabulary allows the children to see new vocabulary in context. I will introduce 1 new word each week to the children and aim to use these as often as possible, and in different contexts, throughout the week. The aim will be for the children to begin using them during their time in provision and when working with an adult.

Intended outcomes for children
Children to use adventurous vocabulary during play.
Improved communication.
Improved confidence in using applying vocabulary to different scenarios.

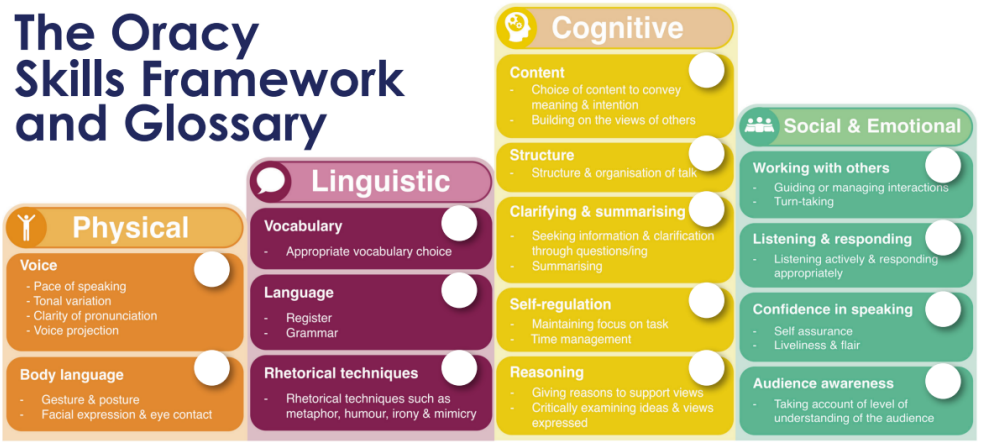
Intended outcomes for staff
Improved confidence in modelling vocabulary.
Improved professional development from carrying out research and working in partnership with others.

Identified training or research
Developing vocabulary in early years (EEF)

Embedding a Culture of Oracy

- Dine & Dialogue
- Opportunities for children to present talent shows and achievement assemblies.
- Extra Curricular Opportunities (Debate Society & Poetry by Heart Events)
- Oracy Assemblies
- No Pens Days
- Governor Reports and Updates
- Listening Walks
- EEF Maths Vocabulary Study
- Speaker of the Week
- School Council





Building an Oracy Curriculum

- **Ensures breadth and depth of oracy opportunities for our EAL children.**
- **Recommends talk strategies which will help children and teachers to achieve their outcomes.**
- **Ensures children talk and present to a range of different audiences.**

LAMMACK'S ORACY CURRICULUM

Year 5

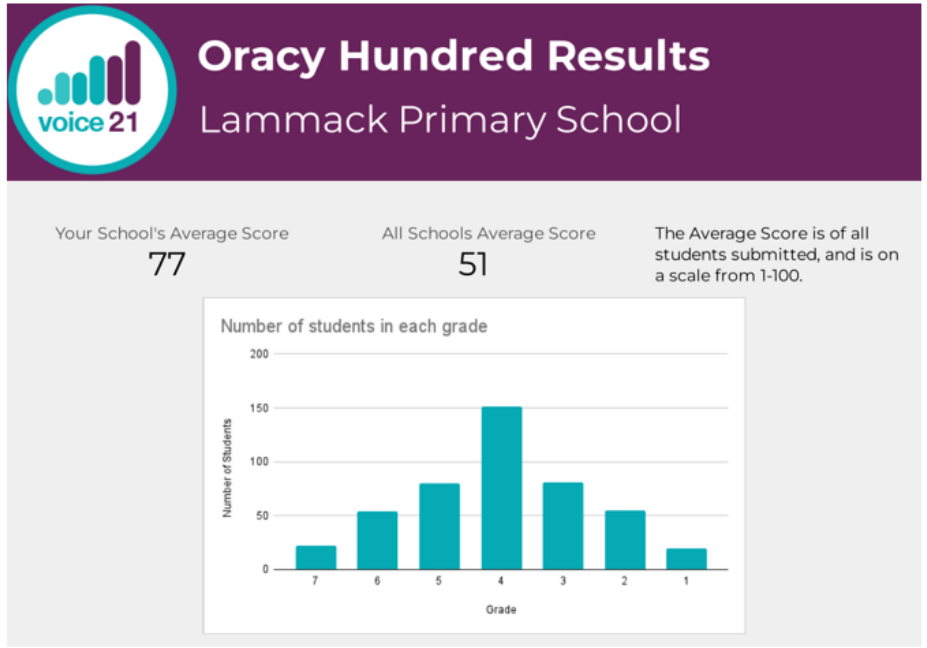
Term	Subject	Outcome	Audience	Oracy Skills	Sequence of Learning
Autumn	Geography – Documentary	A documentary about famous mountain ranges followed by a Q&A session.	School visitors (accessible via QR codes on display)	Pace of speaking (physical). Appropriate vocabulary choice (linguistic). Choice of content to convey (cognitive). Working with others (social & emotional).	Rally Robin – Generating ideas of the activities tourists might undertake in mountain ranges. Just a Minute –What is the difference between a mountain and a hill? Speak Like an Expert – identify the features of a mountain. Word darts – Create a paragraph using
Summer	History – Presentation	Create a presentation on Ancient Egypt translating key historical terms into Arabic.	School governors	Facial expression and eye contact (physical) Appropriate vocabulary choice (linguistic) Structure and organisation of talk/time management (cognitive) To speak with flair and passion (social & emotional)	Rally coach – Used in a variety of lessons. Oracy detectives – specifically listening for historical vocabulary whilst discussing the stages of mummification. Just a Minute – 1 minute to explain the meaning of each canopic jar. Drama – Children have to act out a scene as an ancient Egyptian worker.
-	History/ Geography/Art/ Science	Class assembly	Key Stage 2, Staff & Parents	Voice projection (physical) Humour (linguistic) Maintaining focus on a task (cognitive) Confidence in speaking (social & emotional)	Which emotion – Children given different phrases to say demonstrating different emotions. 1-20 game – Children aim to count to 20 with eyes closed. Only one

Demonstrating Impact

Oracy Learning Walks

In November 2023, Laura Bland (Voice 21 Consultant) and I conducted a whole school oracy learning walk. Further to this, we have hosted learning walks involving our school governors and a separate learning walk with headteachers from other schools. Below are some of the main findings:

- *Oracy takes place throughout Lammack Primary School.*
- *Oracy knowledge amongst the children and staff is strong which was evident during conversations. Everyone is aware of the expectations.*
- *Oracy strategies were evident school-wide and lead to purposeful outcomes.*
- *Kagan structures were used to encourage talk amongst groups of children.*
- *Oracy assemblies ensure that children converse with a range of children and hear different ideas.*
- *Our staff are skilled in modelling good oracy skills. Our children demonstrate good language skills as a result.*





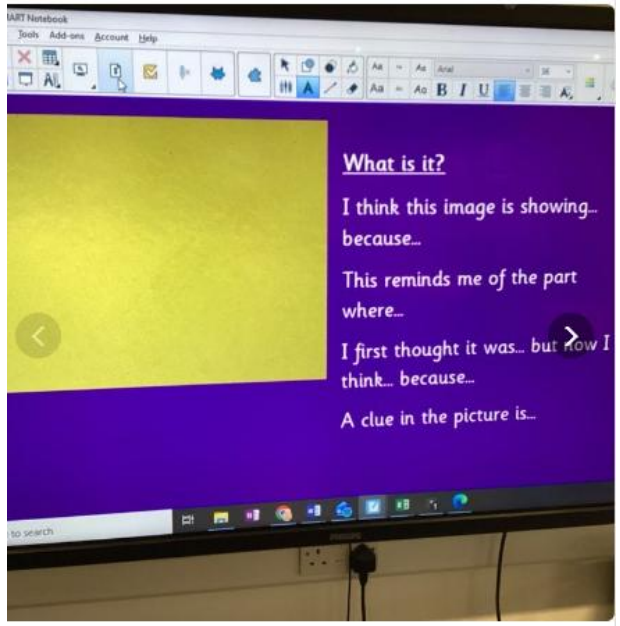
Recording Evidence

blippitboards.com/via/lammack

Scan to find out more about Blippit Boards and trial it for free!

blippit boards

Year 3 Charlie and the Chocolate Factory



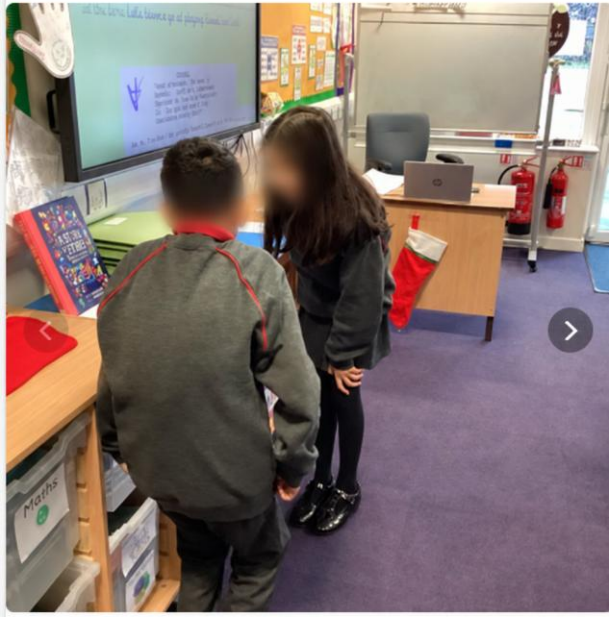
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Created by Mrs Mason
Added 04/12/2025

We have started an English unit on Charlie and the Chocolate Factory today. Both classes have preread some of the text to familiarise them with parts of the story. We started the unit by identifying images linked to the story using stem sentences. We then followed a draw along of Willy Wonka led by Quentin Blake and labelled our drawing using a description from the book.

ks 2 | year 3 | eng: reading | art & design | english | oracy

5E - performing film scripts



0

Created by Mr Elliott
Added 09/12/2025

in English, 5E looked at a film script for 'Up!' and performed the scene. We analysed the differences between a novel and a film script so that we can begin to write our own! When we performed, we used the oracy framework to critique each other's performances.

ks 2 | year 5 | autumn | english | oracy | classroom

Task: A presentation about Ancient Egypt

Date: 13.07.23 | Framework Strand(s):

Oracy Skills:	Secure	Progressing	Emerging	No Evidence
I can use specific vocabulary related to Ancient Egypt.	/			
I can change the register of my voice when speaking to the Governors.			/	
I can complete my presentation in five minutes.	/			
I can present confidently (voice and body language).		/		

Peer Comments:
I thought that you spoke confidently throughout your presentation. You used a lot of topic specific vocabulary such as canopic jar and irrigation. When speaking to the Governors, I thought you could have used formal language.

Teacher's Comments:
A super presentation. You managed your time effectively, used topic vocabulary and presented confidently. Remember to avoid using informal language when speaking formally.

How have we supported EAL learners to fully participate in classroom talk?

Talk is everywhere.
Pupils have regular opportunities to talk, rehearse and present to different audiences.

Vocabulary is explicitly taught.
Pupils hear, rehearse and apply ambitious language across the curriculum.

Everyone has a way into the conversation.
Consistent Talk Tactics (particularly thinking time, nesting, sentence stems and discussion guidelines) remove barriers to participation.

Confidence has grown.
Nesting and rehearsal allow pupils to practise in a safe space before speaking to increasingly wider audiences.

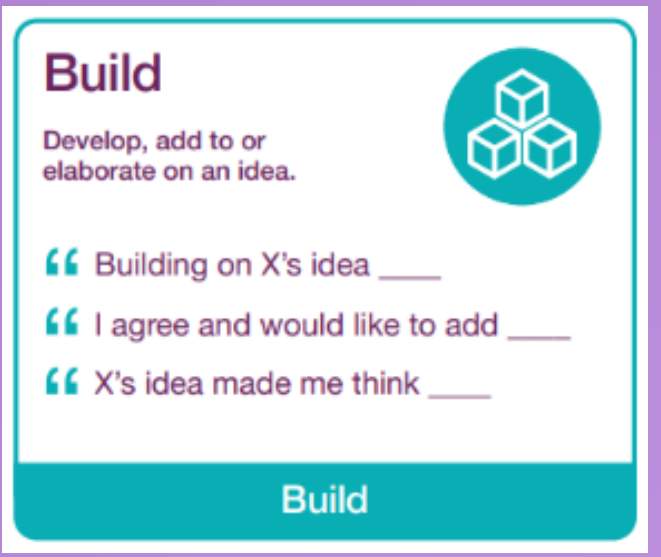
Scaffolds are building independence.
Sentence stems give pupils the language to participate initially, with support reduced as confidence and fluency develop.

Reflection

What is one change you could make to create the conditions for more pupils to participate successfully in classroom talk?

2 minutes







blippit boards

blippitboards.com/via/lammack

Scan to find out more about Blippit Boards and trial it for free!

Thank you for listening. Please ask any questions you may have.

Cameron Elliott – Oracy Lead
c.elliott@lammack.blackburn.sch.uk

Paula Duckworth – Headteacher
paula.duckworth@lammack.blackburn.sch.uk

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voice 21
2024