

How do we develop our students understanding of Rhetoric and Oracy?

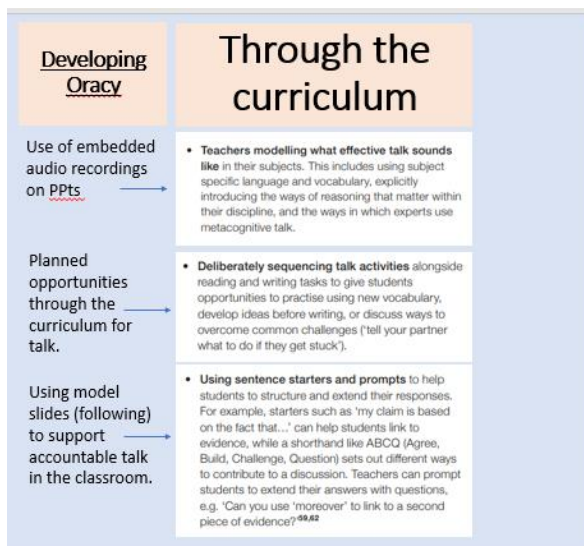
Based on the EEF guidance, we understand that there are five main moral drivers for pushing students to become good speakers at the school.

1. **Improves academic outcomes:** Engaging in high-quality oracy practices during lessons deepens understanding and is linked with improved test scores and exam grades as well as greater knowledge retention, vocabulary acquisition and reasoning skills. The Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) trials of oral language interventions in schools have demonstrated that pupils make approximately five months additional progress over a year, rising to six months for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
2. **Underpins literacy and vocabulary acquisition:** Contributors to the Inquiry have stressed the specific role of oracy in relation to language development, vocabulary acquisition and literacy. Oral language and literacy are described as 'inseparable friends' who take turns to piggy-back on each other during the school years and beyond. The importance of spoken language is highlighted in the EEF's improving literacy guidance for Primary and Secondary schools.
3. **Supports wellbeing and confidence:** The Covid-19 pandemic has wrought havoc on many young people's wellbeing. Teachers think oracy plays a critical role in supporting young people's wellbeing and mental health by providing students with the skills and opportunities to express their thoughts, feelings and emotions, ask for help, interact effectively and positively with peers and adults, and feel listened to and valued. Oracy supports young people to develop their confidence and sense of identity.
4. **Enables young people to access employment and thrive in life beyond school:** Many Inquiry contributors have emphasised the critical role of oracy in supporting young people's transitions into further and higher education, training and employment. With improved oracy comes better academic outcomes and greater self-confidence, enabling young people to access and thrive in post-secondary pathways. The Social Mobility Commission has found that strong communication skills are important for improving social mobility and workplace opportunities.
5. **Develops citizenship and agency:** The Inquiry has taken place against a backdrop of seismic social and political upheaval. Oracy is critical in giving children and young people a voice, literally and figuratively. Providing opportunities for students to express their ideas and critically engage with their peers in dialogue, deliberation and debate are essential if young people are prepared to leave school as active, engaged, and reflective citizens.

Introduction:

We want our students to be effective communicators at The Purbeck School and students should be able to write and speak persuasively expressing their own viewpoints on things that they believe in. Knowledge of rhetoric allows our students to better analyse great speeches, both contemporary and older, develop their cultural capital and take a personal stance on contemporary debates. They should learn to explore experts in the 'art' of formally expressing arguments, learn from these models and practise the art themselves.

Being able to stand up confidently in front of peers is a daunting task for young people and a culture of talking for different aims and purposes should be prioritised in the curriculum:



Through the curriculum, we have scaffolded structured talk tasks that are used to both develop understanding of taught content but also to make students better at speaking with each other.

Exploratory Talk:

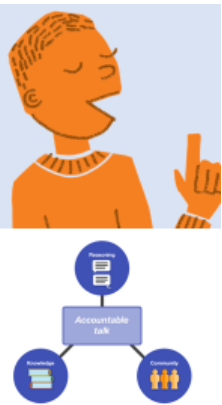
Agree, Build, Challenge, Question

What does it look like?

- Everyone listens actively
- People ask questions
- People share relevant information
- **Ideas may be challenged**
- **Reasons are given for challenges**
- Contributions build on what has gone before
- **Everyone is encouraged to contribute**
- Ideas and opinions treated with respect
- There is a sense of shared purpose
- The group seeks agreement for joint decisions

What does it sound like?

- It often involves incomplete sentences:
'It might be that...' 'It could be that'
- People may finish each other's comments, interrupt, compete to take a turn, argue, disagree with or agree with what is said.
- Some talk might take place with speakers speaking at the same time.



Do you feel that we should use hydrogen fuel cells or electric vehicles to replace petrol engines?

Base your ideas on your **knowledge** and try to **justify** your viewpoint whilst being open to other people's ideas.

Exploratory Talk – be accountable to your community:

Agree, Build, Challenge, Question

How to disagree without offending?

- That's an interesting idea but have you considered...
- **Could** it also be the case that...
- **Might** another way to think about it be...
- Rather than say 'you are wrong' say 'could you be wrong'?

How to compete to take turns without being aggressive?

- 'Could I just make a point here...'
- 'When you've finished, can I add...'



How do you signpost a topic change?

- 'Shall we also consider the idea that...'
- 'It seems that we all agree that... but what do we think about...'

How to discuss?

- Use these phrases to help:
- 'possibly', 'maybe', 'I guess', 'I suppose' and 'perhaps'...
- 'Could it be...' / 'Might it be...'

Base your ideas on your **knowledge** and try to **justify** your viewpoint whilst being open to other people's ideas.

Presentational Talk:

Sustained stretches of talk which enables one speaker to share their viewpoint with an audience. They will have considered the **needs of their audience** and **confidently** share their ideas.

What does it look like?

- The speaker will consider how best to use body language and eye contact.
- The speaker will use rhetorical devices to sustain interest.
- The speaker will have structured their talk carefully to meet the purpose of their talk.

What does it sound like?

- The speaker will control their voice and may stress certain words or phrases.
- The speaker will use 'verbal signposts' to help make the structure clear: **Next, I would like to...**
- The speaker is likely to use Standard English when speaking and adopt an appropriate formal register.

Base your ideas on your **knowledge** and try to **justify your viewpoint** whilst being open to other people's ideas.



Dialogical Talk:

Sustained stretches of talk which enables speakers and listeners to **explore and build on their own and others' ideas** to develop coherent thinking. The aim is to achieve a common understanding through structured questioning and discussion.

What does it look like?

- **Collective:** we work together to complete the task, whether as a pair, group or the whole class!
- **Reciprocal:** we listen to each other, **share ideas** and consider alternative viewpoints
- **supportive:** we don't have fear about 'wrong' answers as they can help us reach a common understanding
- **cumulative:** we build on each other's ideas.
- **purposeful:** we work together to achieve the set goal.

What does it sound like?

- You give feedback to each other as they talk and listen with specific words like **'exactly', 'definitely', 'right', 'absolutely', 'good', 'oh I see'** and **'that's interesting'** or vocalisations **'yeah', 'mmm', 'uh huh'** and **'oh'**.
- You may also use nonverbal signals like a **nod of the head**.
- Speakers switch between topics using phrases such as: **'as I was saying earlier', 'like you were just saying'**.



The five canons of rhetoric that we want our students to make progress in:

Invention: Invention is the process of coming up with material for a text. In writing, this is the brainstorming or prewriting stage.

Arrangement: Arrangement is the process of deciding how to order the material in a text. In writing, this is still part of the prewriting stage.

Style: Style is the process of coming up with the actual words that will be used in a text. In writing, this canon is first approached in the drafting stage and continues in the rewriting stage.

Memory: Memory is the process of committing a text to memory. Although this canon is not as applicable to writing as it is to oratory, there are still occasions when writers must memorize their texts in order to make the delivery (the fifth canon) more effective.

Delivery: Delivery is the process of presenting a text to an audience. Like memory, delivery is less prominent in writing than in oratory; however, there are many occasions when writers must think of how to best deliver their texts.

What Knowledge do we want students to accumulate regarding Rhetoric:

- How to express sophisticated ideas / information / feelings using a sophisticated repertoire of vocabulary.
- How to organise and structures his or her presentation using an effective range of strategies to engage the audience,
- How to achieves the purpose of his or her presentation
- How to listens to questions / feedback and responds perceptively and elaborates with further ideas and information if appropriate.
- Knowledge of how great speakers use the following rhetorical techniques: imagery, pun, irony, rhetorical questions, anecdotes, contrasts or juxtaposition for effect, addressing counter arguments, facts and opinions, hyperbole / superlatives to intensify arguments, expert evidence to support arguments, emotive language, triadic structures, arguments based on ethos, pathos and logos, tone, standard English, non-verbal communication such as gestures and eye contact, register and levels of formality, anaphora.
- We also want students to apply knowledge of these oratory techniques into their own speaking.

Great Modelling of Rhetoric:

We are very delighted to have our students access the finest examples of effective rhetoric for the students to learn from including examples from Queen Elizabeth, Greta Thunberg, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Emmeline Pankhurst and many others.

Assessments:

Whilst effective oracy is a central aspect of all English lessons, we also have structured opportunities in the curriculum to formally assess students in their ability to speak persuasively.