

Issue 1: Autumn 2022

Abbey Multi Academy Trust **Oracy Newsletter**

In partnership to **Educate, Nurture, Empower**



Welcome

Welcome to our first Trust Oracy newsletter. It has been an exciting start to our second year of becoming a *talk-rich* Trust. Our primary schools have embarked upon their Voice 21 pathway to develop curriculum alongside Abbey Grange Academy whilst Lightcliffe Academy continue to further embed classroom practice, which puts oracy at the heart of learning. Both the secondary and primary conferences provided an opportunity for colleagues to reflect upon the impact that our oracy imperative has had thus far on our young people. Many colleagues spoke highly of the pupils' opening keynote at the secondary conference: *Finding Our Voice*.

We are incredibly proud of Bishop Young's achievement as one of only two secondary schools in the country to be accredited with the Voice 21 Centre for Oracy Excellence award. Young people at the academy were delighted to meet with Richard Burgon M. P. to discuss with him the impact that a talk-rich education has had on them.

As a Trust we have much to celebrate around oracy. Abbey Grange have received much external recognition for their participation in external debates including the Schools' Mace, Public Speaking competition, winners of the Leeds Salon KS4 debate and runners up in the prestigious English Speaking Union's *Oracy Culture Award*. St. Chad's successfully completing the Voice 21 performance Poetry module.

There are many exciting oracy initiatives happening across our Trust this year and each issue of this newsletter will aim to both share and celebrate this.



Recommended Read this Month

[Sutton Trust Report \(November 2022\)](#)

[Speaking Up: Accents and Social Mobility](#)



Closing the Word-Gap in Abbey Trust

This term we have launched our cross-Trust project to narrow the word gap through oracy, based on Voice 21 research.

The 2018 Oxford Language Report highlighted the prevalence and impact of the 'word gap'- that is, the difference between the vocabulary a student possess and the vocabulary they need the access their learning. In the 2020 follow-up report, 92% of teachers reported the word gap had widened as a result of lock-downs and school closures. The word-gap affects all students, but particularly those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, or for pupils with additional SEND or EAL needs.

Each school within our Trust is currently undertaking a project to use specific oracy strategies to teach vocabulary so that all pupils experience talk-led word input and are empowered to use new language through word output opportunities. Each oracy champion is selecting key vocabulary that they will actively teach pupils, carefully choosing words that will be useful for pupils in different contexts across the curriculum. Oracy leads from across the Trust will then share the outcomes during the Spring term.

Oracy can support pupils to acquire new vocabulary in the following ways:

- Teachers can explain and model new vocabulary in a more accessible way
- More talk opportunities give pupils time to hear new vocabulary modelled to them in differing contexts
- Pupils can practice newly introduced language
- Pupils with less developed reading skills are not precluded from acquiring new vocabulary
- We look forward to sharing our Spring term newsletter which will focus on our findings!

Each issue we'll provide a Voice 21 talking point to encourage staff to get talking about oracy. Share it across your school, discuss it in the staffroom and go onto the Voice 21 Exchange to engage with other oracy schools.

"It's as important for teachers to talk to each other to further their learning as it is for students to do so"

Follow the QR Code to the V21 Exchange

Talking Point



Talk-Rich: Manston St James

Voice 21 highlights increased confidence amongst pupils

At Manston St James we have built a strong foundation for the basis of good communication, both in talk, listening and the use of body language. All staff and pupils are aware of the discussions guidelines and expectations that are set within each session. Pupils at MSJ have a wide range of opportunities to practise the skills they have been taught through debate days, talking at key events such as collective worship at church or in school, class collective worships, open mornings and by presenting the school to perspective parents.

Hannah Greason from voice 21 visited our school for development day 2 and said the following: 'A real highlight was having a chance to hear how confident and considerate your students were during the focus group. They were able to articulate and thoughtfully demonstrate effective oracy skills - a credit to your hard work over the last year.'

We are now ready to trial planning and explicitly teach the pupils the skills voice 21 have given us to allow all pupils to be heard and for all pupils to have enough confidence to be advocates for themselves.

Talk-Rich: CCUA

Handy talk-tactics

Karen Smith is the Oracy Lead at CCUA. She shares her top tip to embed talk-tactics into the classroom.

"This was introduced at CCUA across all school by our Oracy Champion. Children have a set of the talk tactics on the tables. This means that if you are having a classroom discussion, you can direct the children to these for support. To challenge children, you can suggest which sentence stems to use by



Talk Rich: Bishop Young

Head girl, Ognnemarien Odjadjare was highly articulate when speaking with Richard Burgon M.P. about how her voice has been listened to. Here's what she said:

"I now have a confidence I wouldn't have had before. For example, I became aware that the curriculum we studied in English was very Eurocentric. For example, we studied The Tempest and the depiction of Caliban in the film we watched might have been perceived as derogatory. I was able to voice this in a constructive manner and this helped to change how we study The Tempest at Bishop Young. I feel that our teachers really value our voice."



Talk Rich: St Chad's

We've had a brilliant term so far at St. Chad's as we have continued on our oracy journey. We have established our oracy guidelines for each classroom and have continued to incorporate our talk tactics across the curriculum as well as during worships. The children have loved having the opportunity to use explorative talk in their trios during worship, with even our youngest children getting involved and explaining their ideas clearly and comprehensively. We've also had so much opportunity for presentational talk this past half term as we have been getting ready for our Christmas performances. The children are becoming so confident at speaking publicly and we're so proud of them!

Geography at BYA

"In Geography lessons, Year 9 have been deepening their understanding of global trade issues through group oracy tasks. Students have taken part in the 'trading game.' To be successful in this learning activity, they needed to demonstrate active listening skills and be able to discuss and negotiate effectively with their peers. Students are always encouraged in these oracy tasks to focus on the four strands of oracy to help make their talk impactful on their learning. This is just one example of how all students at BYA are given opportunities to 'learn through talk.'"

- Hannah Clarke, Oracy Champion at BYA

Talk-Rich: Lightcliffe Primary

Y5 and 6 pupils with members of Brighouse Rotary Club, use discussion tactics to create fundraising projects.

On Monday lunchtimes, around 25 children from Y5 and 6 meet with members of the Brighouse Rotary club to discuss how they can raise funds for charities of their choice. The recent Bun Sale and stall at the Christmas Fair has already raised approximately £150 for the charity Focus4Hope.

The children are taught how to chair their weekly meetings, and formally present ideas whilst discussing together their fundraising plans.

The children have had opportunities to develop their oracy skills through their discussions, make announcements about their plans in school assemblies, use persuasive language to persuade children and adults to buy their wares or participate in competitions.

The group has more plans for fundraising in the Spring term and environmental ideas for developing the front of school



Talk-Rich: Lightcliffe Academy

Oracy Lead Tom Hamill speaks about the impact of Talk Tuesdays:

We are excited to build upon the Oracy work we have undertaken through 'Talk Tuesday' activities during form time, ensuring our students learn to talk, learn through talk and value every voice. We are explicitly teaching our students through the four main strands of Oracy during our PSHE curriculum after-Christmas, with a focus on presentational talk; building in opportunities to deliver effective public service announcements. We look forward to updating you!

Abbey Multi Academy Trust
c/o Abbey Grange C of E Academy
Butcher Hill
Leeds
LS16 5EA

enquiries@abbeytrust.org

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 **@abbeymulti**

