

Issue No 5: Spring 2024

Abbey Multi Academy Trust **Oracy Newsletter**

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



Welcome

There continues to be much to celebrate from across the Trust this term regarding our oracy imperative.

This half term we launched the 100 Tier Two words initiative into our primary schools, meaning that we have a Trust-wide approach to narrowing the word gap that builds upon our research project from last academic year. At the heart of teaching new vocabulary in the primaries is the use of oral rehearsal- meaning that pupils are more likely to master their new vocabulary. We look forward to updating you on the impact of this next term.

All eight schools are in the process of implementing the latest oracy intervention into their practice, using Harkness. From Early Years through to A-level, our oracy champions have been planning exploratory talk opportunities that will provide explicit opportunity for feedback on talk for our young people relating to the four strands of oracy: physical, social and emotional, cognitive and linguistic. The results so far are compelling and you can read all about this below.

Finally, as part of the wider national picture around oracy, The Commission on the Future of Oracy Education in England was launched on March 15th, 2024 and has been tasked with examining the vital skills of speaking and listening at a time of unprecedented technological and social change. From March - September 2024, the Commission will shape recommendations to lead to a shift in access to oracy education in England. It continues to be an exciting time to champion the value of oracy across Abbey MAT.

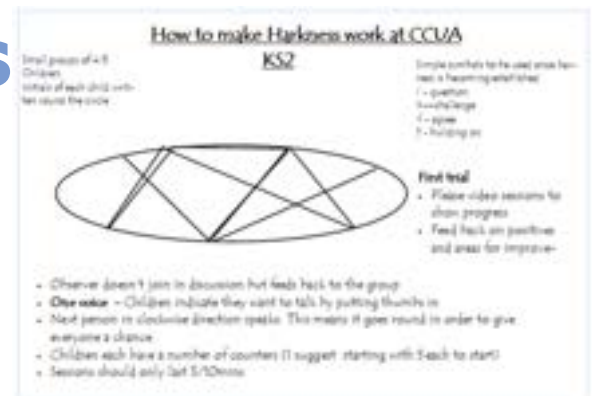


Recommended Read this Month

Impact report 2022 - 2024 - Voice 21



CCUA: How we launched Harkness whole school



Karen Smith is the oracy lead across the primaries. She talks about her own school's approach to launching Harkness as a school-wide oracy initiative:

'At CCUA we have been working on the Harkness model in our lessons, in line with the trust project. It was initially introduced to staff at a weekly CPD session where we all

had the chance to practise using the Harkness method to record our conversation and discuss how it would fit into our teaching. Staff felt that the method used by Voice 21 needed adapting to use in the primary setting, so we broke it down into smaller steps.

In Year 1 we started by just mapping out who had spoken. In Year 2 we started by mapping out who had spoken then added basic a symbol for questions (?). In KS2 children are now adding several symbols to the mapping form and feeding back to the group.

At the CPD staff felt that the Harkness method might be too challenging in a Primary classroom, but we have been pleasantly surprised! It's been wonderful to hear children's voices in every classroom explore deep questions through talk.'

Talking Point

Talk point: 'If talk was assessed- it would become a greater educational priority for schools nationally.'

Share this issue's talk point across your school, discuss it in the staffroom and go onto the Voice 21 Exchange to engage with other oracy schools.



Abbey Grange:

A spotlight on presentational talk

Abbey Grange hosted a second round heat for the ESU's public speaking competition, where students received excellent feedback for their oracy. We are also competing in the final of the Leeds Salon KS4 Debate competition for the third year in a row later this month- we are the only school to have been in all three of the last three finals!

Abbey Grange Academy has also enrolled to be part of the national Poetry by Heart competition. A select group of students from KS4 will perform their poetry for staff and parents on the 21st March. A true commitment has been shown by students to learn and rehearse their poems, chosen by them from the Poetry by Heart anthology. Coaching them on their journey has been inspiring.

Nola in year 8 and Sylvana in year 7 made it through to the Regional Finals of the ESU Performing Shakespeare Competition by delivering wonderfully dramatic Hamlet monologues. This is a competition that enables KS3 students an opportunity to engage with the beautiful language of Shakespeare and develop their oracy skills by introducing themselves, the piece and what resonated with them as well as actually performing the monologue.

In February Scarlett in Year 12 represented Abbey Grange at the regional final of Articulation at the Whitworth Gallery, Manchester. Articulation is a national post-16 public speaking prize aimed at fostering engagement in the visual arts. Scarlett represented the school after winning the internal heat with her fantastic presentation on the contemporary painting, "Burden of yer own making", 2023, by Christina Quarles. Adjudicator Priyesh Mistry (Associate Curator of Modern & Contemporary Projects, the National gallery) praised Scarlett's superb analytical reading of the painting and confident and engaging delivery. Sadly, Scarlett did not win the regional heat however did herself, the Art department and school proud.

Bishop Young: Working with the Speaker's Trust

This term year 10 students have been involved in participating in some workshops run by The Speakers' Trust which aim to develop students' public speaking skills.

Students took part in a series of sessions which promote quality speech-writing, delivery and confidence when stood in front of an audience.

The students also develop their listening skills and the ability to give others feedback. The day culminated in students creating their own speech about a topic of their interest and performing these to the other students. This year our finalists are Evie Dyer, Pariza Bin T Faisal, Yolanda Mahwera, Yasmine Ndiaye, Laura Golebiewska, Priscilla Odetoynbo, Logan Rogers and Tavongwa Takwana.

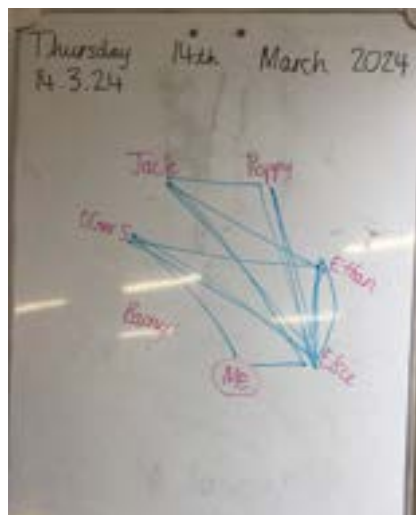
Lightcliffe Academy: Launch of Talk-Tuesdays

At Lightcliffe Academy we have been focusing on relaunching Oracy by using whole school CPD to re introduce the vision and focus on using Oracy strategies in the classroom. This has been followed up by the Oracy leads working with the newly appointed Assistant Head in charge of PD to look at how Oracy can be a focus in form time and in particular to look at supporting staff with delivering 'Talk Tuesday' and 'Talk Thursday'. We have also started our pilot of the 'Harkness' project with two Year 10 groups.



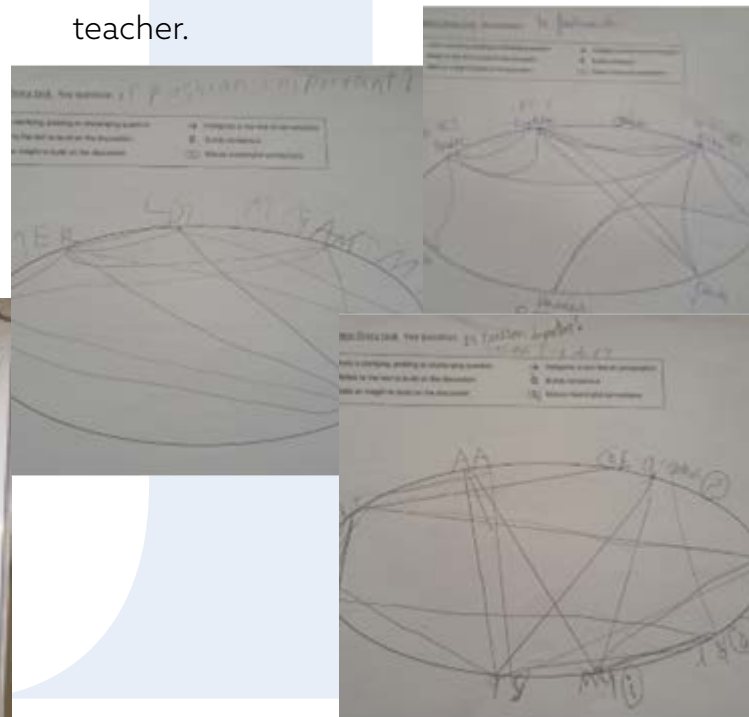
Manston St James: Exploring deep questions through Harkness

Year 6 incorporated the Harkness Model into their history lesson last week. We looked at different perspectives of propaganda from the German's and British views. At the end, the children were given the opportunity to respond to the statement 'Propaganda is an effect source for historians to use to explore History'. The children reflected upon the Harkness Model and were able to see who didn't get a chance to let their voices be heard. They were also encouraged to use the sentence stems when debating in their groups.



Lightcliffe Primary: Scaffolding exploratory talk

Lower KS2 have been trialling Harkness model in relation to our research project in Lightcliffe CE Primary School. Children have been learning how to model discussions and analyse data independently to in turn, understand how to articulate their questions and opinions in discussions. Pictures below show groups of children (aged 7-8) modelling their Harkness oracy task following input and guidance from their teacher.



St Chad's: Growing vocabulary trees



At St Chad's, we have had a big push on using ambitious Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary and have been encouraging children to use this in their work. All classes now have "vocabulary trees" and we are adding words to the tree as we go along. The children are loving using ambitious vocabulary in their work and it has been lovely to see the different words being used across all year groups, both in conversation and in their work.

Holy Trinity: Celebrating talk-rich SIAMS inspection

'Subsequent work by leaders identifies and enriches specific vocabulary progression. RE provides pupils with opportunities to learn about and engage in discussions, extending their breadth of understanding. It provides a safe space for pupils to respectfully disagree.'

At Holy Trinity our recent SIAMS inspection provided an opportunity to show off and celebrate how our work on Oracy has impacted our staff and pupils. Our approach to vocabulary acquisition as well as how we plan for and support children in learning how to talk was shared during the day and formed part of our report. Pupils' use of talk tactics mean they understand how to disagree well and challenge each other and are now such an integral part of learning here at Holy Trinity.

Abbey Multi Academy Trust

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

enquiries@abbeytrust.org

