Department of Education

first steps®

# Speaking and Listening Resource Book

## Addressing Current Literacy Challenges

FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

First steps. Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
ISBN: 978-0-7307-4515-0
SCIS: 1600407

**Acknowledgments**

The authors and publisher would like to thank the following for permission to reproduce the copyright material in this book. For photographs: Bill Thomas/Imagen © pps.3, 27, 46, 86, 92, 100, 108, 136; Getty Images © p.105; Jason Edwards Photography © pps.1, 19, 55, 63, 80, 84, 93, 97, 99, 128, 182, 185.

Thanks to Hillsmeade Primary School and Bentleigh Secondary College.

Every effort has been made to trace and acknowledge copyright. The publisher would welcome any information from people who believe they own copyright to material in this book.


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

**Authors' Acknowledgements**

The *First Steps* writing team acknowledges everyone who contributed to the development of this resource. We give our grateful thanks to the following people:

All teachers and students who were involved in the preparation of units of work, trialling the materials and offering feedback.

Those students and teachers who provided us with great work samples and transcripts to enhance the text. Special thanks to Vicki Brockhoff for her work in the creation and collection of many of these work samples.

The contribution made to the development of these materials by the research into oral language published by Professor Rhonda Oliver and Dr Yvonne Haig from Edith Cowan University, and Dr Judith Rochecouste from the University of Melbourne.

The authors of the original *First Steps* edition, developed by the Department of Education of Western Australia, and the efforts of the many individuals who contributed to that resource.


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

# Contents


**Introduction** 1

The Explicit Teaching of Speaking and Listening 2

## Chapter 1

### Use of Texts

Overview 3

**Section 1: Procedures for Teaching Speaking and Listening** 5

Using a Range of Instructional Procedures 5

What Are Procedures for Teaching Speaking and Listening? 5

Modelled Speaking and Listening 8

Language in Action 10

Substantive Conversations 13

Exploratory Talk 16

Investigating Language in a Communicative Environment 20

Scaffolding 24

Small-Group Inquiry 28

Embedding Speaking and Listening within the Classroom 33

**Section 2: The Functions of Oral Language** 41

Developing Communicative Competence in the Functions of Language 45

Discussions 46

Extended Conversations 53

Partner and Small-Group Work 56

Oral Reports 64

Questioning and Inquiry 67

Interviews 76

Meetings 82

Arguments and Informal Debates 85

Interest Talks 90

Storytelling and Anecdotes 94

## Chapter 2

### Contextual Understanding 100

Overview 100

**Section 1: Developing Contextual Understanding for Speaking and Listening** 101

Situational Context 101

Socio-cultural Context 102

What Students Need to Know 102

Developing Critical Awareness 118

Embedding Speaking and Listening within the Classroom 119

## Chapter 3

### Conventions 128

Overview 128

**Section 1: Effective Teaching of Conventions** 129

Analyse a Context 130

Select a Focus 130

**Section 2: Developing Understanding of Conventions** 132

Conventions of Social Interaction 132

Formulaic Speaking and Listening 134

Vocabulary 137

Developing Grammar 141

Features of Spoken Language 143

Embedding the Conventions of Speaking and Listening within the Classroom 147

## Chapter 4

### Processes and Strategies 151

Overview 151

**Section 1: Speaking and Listening Processes and Strategies** 152

Developing Metalinguistic Awareness 152

What Are the Speaking and Listening Strategies? 153

What Are the Speaking and Listening Processes? 158

Teaching the Speaking and Listening Processes and Strategies 159

Developing Metacognitive Awareness 164

Speaking Process: Overview 165

Speaking Process: Planning and Preparing 166

Speaking Process: Managing Speaking 184

Speaking Process: Reflecting, Reviewing and Refining 186




© Department of Education WA 2013


Reviewed August 2013

Listening Process: Overview 187
Listening Process: Planning and Preparing 189
Listening Process: Managing Listening 194
After Listening: Reflecting, Reviewing and Refining 201

**Glossary** 202
**Bibliography** 204


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

# Introduction

The *First Steps Speaking and Listening Resource Book* builds on the original *First Steps* speaking and listening text (formerly known as the *Oral Language Resource Book*) by drawing on contemporary research and developments in the field of spoken language and its importance for students' social and academic development. The new *Speaking and Listening Resource Book*, used in conjunction with the *First Steps Speaking and Listening Map of Development* Second Edition, has a strong focus on supporting teachers as they implement a dynamic interactive model of speaking and listening.

The *First Steps Speaking and Listening Resource Book* will help teachers focus on the explicit teaching of the different forms of spoken language; speaking and listening processes, strategies and conventions; and the contextual aspects associated with composing and understanding oral texts. Teachers will find the information relevant for all phases of speaking and listening development, and will be able to apply the ideas and suggestions with all students in their classroom.

CD-ROM icons appear throughout the *First Steps Speaking and Listening Resource Book*. They indicate that a practical format is available on the *Speaking and Listening CD-ROM* (included in the *First Steps Speaking and Listening Map of Development* Second Edition). The CD-ROM contains activity formats, recording sheets and resource lists, as well as teaching, learning and assessment frameworks. The *First Steps Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning* book is also a useful companion resource.

**Figure 1.1**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

# The Explicit Teaching of Speaking and Listening

Teaching students to become effective speakers and listeners cannot be simplified, as speaking and listening and their accompanying behaviours are involved in almost everything students and teachers do throughout the day. The teacher's role is to ensure that students develop the confidence to become effective speakers and listeners in order to meet their future needs in social, academic, family and community contexts.

To effectively teach speaking and listening, teachers need to provide meaningful opportunities for students to talk for a range of purposes. Teachers also need to explicitly teach the components of different types of discourse, e.g. planned and unplanned, formal and informal, dialogue and monologue, public and private. Teachers can significantly assist students by discussing the demands of each of these contexts, and by identifying strategies that might be useful (Haig unpublished notes 2005). The ability to provide skilful instruction that balances explicit skills instruction within authentic contextually grounded activities is a feature of effective teachers (Hall 2004).

Effective teachers spend more time in small-group teaching, as it allows them to personalise the curriculum for students and to differentiate tasks and interaction according to individual student's needs. They also spend more time guiding and scaffolding students' learning while engaging them in extended conversations, rather than using a more formal recitation or telling mode. Effective teachers are expert at seizing the teachable moment and using it effectively, rather than being tightly bound by the planned lesson (Collins-Block and Pressley, cited Hall 2004).

Effective speaking and listening teachers tend to be expert differentiators as a result of their greater in-depth knowledge of their students, not just as students, but as people from particular families and communities. These teachers know how to build on the personal and cultural backgrounds of their students. They emphasise creativity and self-expression. These effective teachers embed knowledge and skills in their social and functional contexts and they do not separate cognitive and affective aspects of learning. Most importantly, they have high expectations for all their students (Hall 2004). The seven instructional procedures outlined in Section 1 of the 'Use of Texts' chapter incorporate these characteristics.


© Department of Education WA 2013

CHAPTER 1

# Use of Texts

## Overview

The Use of Texts aspect focuses on the composition of a range of texts. Texts are defined as any form of communication from which meaning is created. This can be spoken, written or visual.

Different categories are used to sort the range of texts that students might compose; for example, fiction and non-fiction, narrative and informational, narrative and expository, literature and mass media. Texts in the *First Steps* resource are classified in three categories — written, spoken or visual. Each category can be further separated into printed, live and electronic, with some texts falling into one or more categories, e.g. video is a combination of an electronic, spoken and visual text.

Spoken texts are more dynamic, flexible and varied than printed texts, and need to be viewed differently. Spoken texts are context- and audience-dependent, as exchanges are constantly being modified and reviewed when speakers and listeners interact.

The *First Steps Speaking and Listening Resource Book* uses Halliday's model of language functions as an organisational tool for identifying the range of spoken texts that students require for social and academic competence. Teachers need to understand what these language functions are, and make sure that the teaching and learning program explicitly addresses students' developing understanding, skills or attitudes.

**Figure 1.2 Students Follow the Conventions of Small-Group Interaction.**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

This chapter provides information about ways to develop students' knowledge and understandings of spoken texts. The two sections are as follows:

- **Section 1 — Procedures for Teaching Speaking and Listening**
- **Section 2 — Understanding the Functions of Oral Language**




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

SECTION 1

# Procedures for Teaching Speaking and Listening

## Using a Range of Instructional Procedures

The strategic use of a range of instructional procedures creates a strong foundation for a comprehensive approach to teaching speaking and listening. Each procedure involves varying degrees of responsibility for both the teacher and the student. Using a selective range of teaching procedures ensures that explicit instruction and guidance, when needed, is balanced with regular opportunities for independent application of understandings, processes and strategies. Once teachers are familiar with a range of procedures, they can determine which procedure will be the most effective to use according to students' needs, their familiarity with the task or the speaking and listening context.

## What Are Procedures for Teaching Speaking and Listening?

Instructional procedures provide meaningful contexts for focusing on selected parts of the speaking and listening process. They are characterised by a number of widely accepted steps or stages, conducted frequently and are generally applicable to all phases of development. Seven procedures have been selected as a comprehensive approach to speaking and listening. The seven procedures are:

- **Modelled Speaking and Listening**
- **Language in Action**
- **Substantive Conversations**
- **Exploratory Talk**
- **Investigating Language in a Communicative Environment**
- **Scaffolding**
- **Small Group Inquiry**

The inclusion of each procedure has been influenced by the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Pearson and Gallagher 1983). This framework provides students with a supportive context and a high




© Department of Education WA 2013

degree of teacher control through modelling, through to a more independent context where the students have greater control (independent application).

Procedures such as Modelled Speaking and Listening and Language in Action give teachers authentic opportunities to model appropriate language structures, vocabulary and concepts.

Procedures such as Scaffolding and Substantive Conversations provide opportunities for teachers to engage in extended conversations with students, and to facilitate extended conversations between students. They provide a framework that will explicitly help teachers and students co-construct knowledge, promoting coherent shared understanding about a topic or theme. The instructional procedure Investigating Language in a Communicative Environment provides a framework that enables the teacher and students to study authentic language use in real contexts outside the classroom, e.g. the canteen. In this way students explicitly learn about, and become familiar with, different functions of language and their accompanying behaviours.

Exploratory Talk and Small Group Inquiry allow students to talk and apply what they have learnt about speaking and listening; they also give teachers an opportunity to observe students and elicit future teaching points.

Teachers need to be aware of the essential elements of each procedure; this will enable teachers to select the most appropriate instructional procedure to meet the needs of individuals and small groups.


© Department of Education WA 2013

## Overview of Speaking and Listening Procedures

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Modelled Speaking and Listening** | The explicit demonstration of a speaking and listening function, behaviour, interaction or convention. | • Sessions are brief: five to ten minutes.<br>• Sessions have a clear, singular focus.<br>• Clear 'Think-aloud' statements are used.<br>• Can involve small groups or the whole class.<br>• Students practise the skill immediately, as the teacher assists and observes. |
| **Language in Action** | Language in Action occurs when language use accompanies hands-on activity such as construction, model building, movement, manipulation, cooking and science investigations. | • Based on a shared experience that provides the impetus for talk.<br>• Can be planned or spontaneous.<br>• Uses shared experience that captures students' interest as a stimulus for talk. |
| **Substantive Conversations** | Sustained conversation that is scaffolded by teachers and students in an ongoing way across most of a lesson. | • Dialogue that constitutes a sustained exchange that extends beyond the typical IRE (initiate, response, evaluate) pattern. It is characterised by a series of topically linked exchanges between students or between teacher and students.<br>• A progressive dialogue that builds rationally on participants' ideas to promote and improve shared understandings of a topic or theme, e.g. use of linking words, explicit reference to previous comments, etc.<br>• Interactive conversations that involve the sharing of ideas. They are not scripted tasks that can be controlled by one party, such as the teacher. |
| **Exploratory Talk** | Exploratory Talk allows learners to explore, clarify or try out a line of thought through questioning, hypothesising, speculating, making logical deductions and responding to others' ideas. | • Tasks are characterised by doing and thinking.<br>• Thinking-aloud enables students to grapple with ideas and clarify their thoughts.<br>• Students use language in interaction with others.<br>• Language learning is facilitated because students enter into the dialogue on their own terms.<br>• Students' topic knowledge is built up as reasoning is made more visible. |
| **Investigating Language in a Communicative Environment** | A communicative environment is any context where people are communicating. Investigating oral language in a communicative environment is to observe and record the authentic language used in that context. | • Observe authentic language use in real contexts.<br>• Analyse using suitable frameworks, e.g. speech situation, speech event and speech act.<br>• Record observations. |
| **Scaffolding** | Scaffolding is the essential but temporary support structure that teachers provide to help students develop new understandings, new concepts and new abilities. | • Specific help that enables the student to achieve a task that would not be possible without support (Jones cited Hammond 2001).<br>• Provides a means of supporting a student to achieve their goal.<br>• Provides quality cognitive support and guidance to support student learning.<br>• Timely instruction at point of need; the 'teachable moment' can be identified and potential maximised.<br>• Temporary in nature; support is withdrawn as learners become increasingly able to complete a task independently.<br>• Challenging and supportive.<br>• Focus on meaning and responding to meaning; this enables students to 'make meaning' from the grammar and structure of what was said. |
| **Small-Group Inquiry** | A planning cycle for small-group learning where students work through a sequence of stages in groups of four: engagement, exploration, transformation, presentation and reflection. | • Students work in groups of four.<br>• Curriculum content is constructed through talk (Jones 1996).<br>• Concepts and ideas become known and understood through interactions between people, texts and artefacts (Jones 1996).<br>• Talk is a tool for thinking and communicating in subject-specific ways. |

Figure 1.3



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

# Modelled Speaking and Listening

**Definition:** The explicit demonstration of a speaking and listening function, behaviour, interaction or convention.

## Description

A modelled lesson focuses on the explicit teaching of a selected speaking and listening function, convention or behaviour. The focus should be based on an identified class, group or individual need. Modelled speaking and listening lessons are most effective when used prior to a new speaking and listening activity, although students will require many demonstrations before they become proficient.

## Key Features

- Sessions are brief: five to ten minutes.
- Sessions have a clear, singular focus.
- Clear Think-Aloud statements are used.
- Can involve small groups or the whole class.
- Students practise the skill immediately, as the teacher assists and observes.

## Benefits for Students

Modelled speaking and listening helps students to:

- understand the different functions of language
- become familiar with the use of specialised vocabulary and concepts
- gain an insight into the behaviours associated with different contexts, and understand why they occur
- internalise the models of language, eventually using them to construct their own speech.

## Suggestions for Using Modelled Speaking and Listening in the Classroom

### Planning for a *Modelled Lesson*

- Determine the purpose, audience and situation for the speaking and listening activity.
- Establish an explicit focus for the session based on students' needs.
- Decide if the teaching and learning will be recorded, e.g. class chart, flip chart, individual journals.


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

### Conducting a *Modelled Lesson*

- Clearly explain the chosen speaking and listening focus, making links to students' experience and prior learning.
- Explain the purpose, audience and situation of the speaking and listening event.
- Use clear Think-Aloud statements.
- Emphasise and explain any specific vocabulary or phrases that students should use.
- Record useful vocabulary or phrases.
- Display any charts made jointly with the students.

### After a *Modelled Lesson*

- Provide opportunities for students to practise and apply their understandings independently.
- Display any charts or lists that have been jointly constructed, referring to them as needed.

## Ideas for Assessment

There are few opportunites for assessment in Modelled Speaking and Listening. The purpose of this procedure is for teachers to model specific language use to address students' needs, e.g. understanding of the different functions of language and their related contexts; familiarity with the specific vocabulary and concepts used, and accompanying behaviours that relate to the context.

| ***Reflecting on the Effective Use of a Modelled Lesson*** |
| --- |
| • Do I provide meaningful opportunities for my students to talk?<br>• Do I discuss the specific demands of different spoken contexts with my students?<br>• Do I explicitly teach students about the different components of discourse, e.g. planned and unplanned, formal and informal, public and private, dialogue and monologue?<br>• Do I provide opportunities for students to apply their understandings? |




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Language in Action

**Definition:** Language in Action occurs when language use accompanies hands-on activity such as construction, model building, movement manipulation, cooking, science investigations, etc.

## Description

Language accompanying action allows teachers to contextualise the teaching of language through language use, and to effectively model the functions of language (Jones 1996). These authentic situations provide natural opportunities for teachers to model appropriate language structures and vocabulary in a meaningful ways.

## Key Features

- Based on a shared experience that provides the impetus for talk.
- Can be planned or spontaneous.
- Uses any shared experience that captures students' interest as a stimulus for talk.

## Benefits for Students

- Helps learners to become familiar with particular concepts and related vocabulary.
- Specialised vocabulary and concepts are introduced and modelled in a meaningful way.
- Allows students to develop a set of shared understandings about language, effectively developing a metalanguage (MacLean 2005).
- Repeated interactions allow students to internalise the models of language they hear, eventually using them to help construct their own language.

## Suggestions for Language in Action in the Classroom

### Planning for *Language in Action*

- Decide on a focus for the session based on students' needs.
- Capitalise on student, group or class interests.
- Involve students in the planning, preparation and organisation of the experience.
- Clearly explain the chosen speaking and listening focus, making links to students' prior knowledge and experience.


© Department of Education WA 2013

## Conducting *Language in Action*

- Explain the purpose, audience and situation surrounding the speaking and listening; discuss the type of language we use when the context is immediate and when it is distant. A group of 10-year-olds during a science experiment share an immediate context, e.g. 'This ...'. 'No, it doesn't go ...'. 'It doesn't move ...'. 'Try that ...'. 'Yes, it does ...'. 'A bit ...'. 'That won't ...'. 'It won't work, it's not metal ...'. 'These are the best ...'. 'It's going really fast'. One student from the group speaking after the experiment needs to explain the distant context, e.g. 'We tried a pin, a pencil sharpener, some iron filings and a piece of plastic. The magnet didn't attract the pin'. The first example uses embedded language in a face-to-face interaction. The speaker is able to use reference words such as *this*, *these* and *that*, because all of the students can see what is being talked about. The second example has a distant context; the student no longer has the materials in front of them and has to rely on language to reconstruct the experiment. This involves making explicit the people and objects they are referring to (we, pin, pencil, sharpener, iron filings, piece of plastic) and to name what happened (attract) (Gibbons 2002).
- Respond to students' comments when talking about the shared experience; extend the comments and use them to make salient points about the language (Jones 1996).
- Make sure that all students are involved. Provide plenty of opportunities for conversation during the experience.
- Use clear Think-Aloud statements.
- Highlight and explain any specific vocabulary or phrases that could be used.

## After *Language in Action*

- Discuss and highlight the mode features of spoken language. Because the language is used in a face-to-face context where we can see what is being talked about, we often use reference words such as *this*, *these* and *that*. We can also point to items in the immediate environment and have others know what we are talking about.
- Discuss what happens when students tell others what they have learnt. The context has changed, and language use moves from more concrete to more abstract. This puts pressure on the speaker to reconstruct the experience through language; the speaker now has to provide a context for the reader, as the speaker is unable to depend on shared assumptions.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Compare and discuss the linguistic demands of the spoken text as opposed to the written text.
- Record any useful vocabulary or phrases. Display any charts made jointly with the students.
- Discuss ways of recounting or reporting the experience for different purposes and different audiences (Jones 1996).

## Ideas for Assessment

Language in Action allows teachers to observe students working as part of the whole class or in a small group. These observations provide valuable information about each student's confidence level in using (or having a go at using) appropriate vocabulary, behaviours and language structures in different communicative contexts. They also enable the teacher to provide immediate corrective oral feedback and explicit information about each language feature.

| ***Reflecting on the Effective Use of Language in Action*** |
| --- |
| • Did I help students make sense of the activities we were engaged in?<br>• Did I provide opportunities for students to say what they had learnt, describe the events that happened or explain outcomes?<br>• Were students engaged in a genuine communicative situation?<br>• Did I make use of open-ended questions?<br>• Did I use the opportunity to extend students' knowledge of vocabulary, language structures or functions? |




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

# Substantive Conversations

**Definition:** Sustained conversational dialogue that extends beyond the typical Initiate, Response, Evaluate pattern (IRE). It is characterised by a series of topically linked exchanges between students, or between teachers and students. (Department of Education, Queensland, 2002).

## Description

Substantive classroom conversations are sustained conversational dialogues that occur among students, and between students and the teacher. These interactions are reciprocal and promote shared understandings; they are used to create or negotiate understanding of a topic. The talk is characterised by intellectual substance and encourages critical reasoning, e.g. making distinctions, applying ideas, forming generalisations and raising questions (Department of Education, Queensland, 2002).

## Key Features

- Dialogue that constitutes a sustained exchange that extends beyond the typical **Initiate**, **Response**, **Evaluate** (IRE) pattern, i.e. the dialogue features a series of topically linked exchanges among students or between teacher and students.
- A progressive dialogue that builds rationally on participants' ideas to promote and improve shared understandings of a topic or theme, e.g. use of linking words, explicit reference to previous comments, etc.
- Interactive conversations that involve sharing of ideas. It is not a scripted task that can be controlled by one party, such as the teacher (Department of Education, Queensland, 2002).

## Benefits for Students

Substantive Conversations provide students with an opportunity to:

- co-construct, develop or extend their knowledge and understanding in a coherent way
- respond to, explain or elaborate on a comment by the teacher or another student
- question or invite responses from other students.


© Department of Education WA 2013

# Suggestions for Using Substantive Conversations in the Classroom

## Planning for *Substantive Conversations*

- Provide students with the space to talk, observe and comment; to question and query; to discover and explain; to initiate conversations on topics of interest; and to experiment with language in the context of daily classroom life (Swan 2004).
- Engage students in activities that require co-construction of knowledge.

## Conducting *Substantive Conversations*

- Explicitly teach students how to scaffold conversations so they become engaged in sustained exchanges that extend beyond routine **Initiate**, **Response**, **Evaluate** (IRE) or **Initiate**, **Response**, **Feedback** (IRF) patterns, e.g. provide 'point of need' scaffolding by asking certain kinds of questions, listening carefully to students' responses and using a variety of strategies to extend and clarify students' thinking (Hammond 2001). See Figure 1.4.

| | |
|---|---|
| Teach students to build on others' ideas by making explicit reference to previous comments | • That was a good point about … It could also … .<br>• I would like to add to what Sam said by … .<br>• Yes! And then you could … .<br>• Okay, but don't you think … ? |
| Encourage students to summarise and extend others' contributions to confirm or clarify their ideas | • Am I right in thinking that you mean … ?<br>• Are you saying … ?<br>• Have I got it right? You think …<br>• So are we supposed to be …<br>• So that suggests that …<br>• So we don't understand the bit where … |
| Teach students to redirect their comments, questions and statements to others, and how to probe to select the next speaker | • What is it about … that makes you say … ?<br>• Can you tell us a little more about … ? |
| Teach students how to seek clarification | • What do you mean when you say… ? Can you give us an example?<br>• Is that the same as … ?<br>• Can you explain a little more about … ?<br>• What do you think it means? |

**Figure 1.4 Strategies for Extending and Clarifying Students' Thinking**




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

- Capitalise on teachable moments that arise through unplanned discussions, students' interests and observations. Listen to students' comments, queries and questions, and respond to them.
- Ensure that that all responses to student interactions clarify and elaborate.
- Encourage and invite students to participate through questioning, discussion, role-play or rehearsal.
- Discuss how knowledge is collaboratively constructed through conversation or dialogue. Teach students to value their classmates' contributions, as this promotes shared understanding of a topic or theme.
- Teach students to critically reason by demonstrating how to make distinctions, apply ideas, form generalisations and ask questions (Department of Education, Queensland, 2002).
- Explain how the Exploratory Talk stage gives students the opportunity to develop their knowledge of technical language.

### After *Substantive Conversations*

- Discuss what scaffolding was utilised by yourself and the students to extend the conversation; use examples to make the references explicit. Use video or taped transcripts, or analyse extracts from radio discussion programs.
- Have students record their reflections in a talk diary.

## Ideas for Assessment

Substantive conversations allow teachers to observe students as they talk, e.g. how students construct and sustain dialogue when negotiating understanding of a topic. Look for students who promote shared understanding of a topic or theme, raise questions, form generalisations, apply ideas and make distinctions. This enables the teacher to monitor each student's development and plan for future teaching and learning experiences.

| ***Reflecting on Substantive Conversations*** |
| --- |
| • Did teacher and students scaffold the conversation in an ongoing way?<br>• Was there evidence of critical reasoning, e.g. making distinctions, applying ideas, forming generalisations, asking questions?<br>• Did teacher and students provide extended statements and address their comments, questions or statements directly to others? |


© Department of Education WA 2013

# Exploratory Talk

**Definition:** Exploratory talk allows learners to explore and clarify, and to try out a line of thought through questioning, hypothesising, speculating, making logical deductions and responding to others' ideas (Gibbons 2002).

## Description

Exploratory talk is unplanned dialogue between two or more students, allowing speakers and listeners to construct meaning together. In exploratory talk, students are trying to find the language structures and features they need to explain an idea or process, or to pool collective knowledge about a topic or concept. Language is being used as an instrument of learning, so speech is characterised by hesitations, experiments with vocabulary, false starts, repetitions and unfinished statements (Derewianka 1992).

Teachers do not teach exploratory talk; instead they provide authentic opportunities that *require* this sort of speaking and listening. Gibbons states that 'it is important ... for learners to have opportunities to use stretches of discourse in contexts where there is a press on their linguistic resources, and where, for the benefit of their listeners, they must focus not only on what they wish to say but how they are saying it' (Gibbons 2002).

Exploratory talk falls under 'function of language' on Halliday's Heuristic: 'Tell me why?' — seeking and testing knowledge. This function requires language for academic purposes and so the language is linguistically more complex. It is important for students to gain control of this language function. (See Figure 1.15 on page 41 for more detail on Halliday's Heuristic.)

## Key Features

- Tasks are characterised by doing and thinking.
- Thinking aloud enables students to grapple with ideas and to clarify thoughts (Reid et al 2001).
- Students use language in interaction with others.
- Language learning is facilitated because students enter into dialogue on their own terms.
- Students' topic knowledge is built up as reasoning is made more visible.


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

## Benefits for Students

- Students jointly participate in constructing dialogue.
- Students have the opportunity to complete each others' remarks and prompt each other to continue.
- Wording is refined through joint construction, and concept understandings are reworked and modified.
- Students' talk helps them to develop better understanding (Reid et al 2002).
- Individual students are scaffolded by the group as a whole.
- Language exercises are a result of a real and shared purpose.
- Producing language encourages learners to process the language more deeply than when they simply listen, and tends to stretch (or push) the language learner in a way that listening alone does not (Swain 1995, cited Gibbons 2002).
- Context requires learners to focus on the ways they are expressing themselves, pushing them to produce more comprehensible, coherent and grammatically improved discourse (Swain 1995, cited Gibbons 2002).

## Suggestions for Exploratory Talk in the Classroom

### Planning for *Exploratory Talk*

- The opportunity for students to use exploratory talk is the most important stage in all learning activities. Teachers should provide regular time and opportunities as part of their teaching routine (Reid et al 2002).
- Find out about students' current language abilities and the language used in the subjects and topics they are studying; use this language in developing teaching and learning activities (Jones 1996).
- On occasions, give students time to think or write for themselves before a small-group discussion begins. This strategy is non-threatening, provides a focus for talk and potentially provides the individual with something to contribute. Encourage younger students to use the Think, Pair, Share strategy (Reid et al 2002).
- Groups of four are recommended for small-group exploration. Working in pairs is also useful, particularly if students are younger or in the early stages of learning about group work.

### Conducting *Exploratory Talk*

- Provide time for students to talk — and to talk only — in home groups or with partners whenever they encounter new information. This allows students to explore the information for themselves before being directed to do anything with it (Reid et al 2002).




© Department of Education WA 2013

- The tentative nature of exploratory talk often makes it sound like students are not on-task, especially when they use their own personal life experiences to make sense of new information. They actually are on-task; this is an important phase in their learning and a phase that Reid et al (2002) states will pay dividends as the learning progresses.
- Set up situations where students work at different tasks in a related subject area. This enables each group of students to hold different information and provides an authentic purpose for reporting back to the whole group (Gibbons 2002).
- Explain why you are encouraging talk, and provide students with opportunities to reflect on how talking has clarified their thinking (Reid et al 2002).
- Formulate well-guided instructions, e.g. Try and explain what you see. Such instructions encourage extended individual responses, extending the task from just doing to doing and thinking (Gibbons 2002).
- Monitor students' concept or skill development and decide if explicit teaching is needed for individuals, groups or the whole class (Reid et al 2002).
- After engaging students in investigations in which they develop shared knowledge, use this as the basis to introduce subject-specific vocabulary (Gibbons 2002).

## After *Exploratory Talk*

- Invite students to share what they have learnt. Encourage extended responses by setting up a context that allows students to initiate what they want to talk about, e.g. What would happen if … ? How can you tell? What will be the consequences?
- Provide opportunities for students to report back to the class. This allows students to make sense of the activities they have been engaged in, to say what they have learnt, and to describe the events and their outcomes.
- Value and scaffold students' oral contributions and explanations. Guide students' responses without taking over; this can be done by increasing wait time following questions, and by asking questions that require general rather than personal responses.
- Provide time for reflective journal writing.


© Department of Education WA 2013

## Ideas for Assessment

Exploratory Talk provides teachers with an opportunity to observe how students express themselves in each language function, e.g. imparting and seeking factual information, getting things done, socialising, expressing and finding out. They use these observations to identify students' learning needs and make the necessary adjustments to their teaching and learning programs to address these issues.

***Reflecting on the Effective Use of Exploratory Talk***

- Did I help students to make sense of the activities we were engaged in?
- Did I provide opportunities for students to say what they had learnt, describe the events that happened or explain outcomes?
- Were students engaged in a genuine communicative situation?
- Were students engaged in meaningful dialogues?
- Did students engage in the broader concept understandings and language of the particular subject area?
- Did I make use of open-ended questions to scaffold students' conversations?
- Did I ask supportive questions that extended discussion or extended a student's contribution?

**Figure 1.5 Exploratory Talk Helps Students Make Sense of Activities**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Investigating Language in a Communicative Environment

**Definition:** A communicative environment is any context where people are communicating. Investigating oral language in a communicative environment occurs by observing and recording the authentic language used in that context.

## Description

Investigating oral language in a communicative environment involves studying authentic language use in any context outside the classroom. Teach and encourage students to observe and record the function of language or the vocabulary used, any displays of sociolinguistic competence, the topics of conversation or the patterns of interaction (Haig, Oliver, and Rochecouste 2005).

## Key Features

- Observe authentic language use in real contexts.

## Benefits for Students

- Students develop communicative competence through understanding how to use linguistic and pragmatic resources to communicate effectively.
- Students become familiar with the different functions of language.

## Suggestions for Investigating a Communicative Environment in the Classroom

### Planning for *Investigating Language in a Communicative Environment*

- Describe and discuss what a communicative environment is.
- Provide background information on how to map a communicative environment. Oliver et al (2005) break it down to a set of simple stages:
  - Observe the way people talk to each other.
  - Observe what they talk about.
  - Observe when and how often they talk to each other.
  - Record the words they use.
  - Record what they talk about.
  - Record the type of language they need.
  - Observe how they change their language in different settings.
- Teach students how to record their observations in the communicative environment. Oliver et al (2005) recommend:




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

  - drawing concept maps that illustrate how people communicate, and how often
  - noting or recording the situations in which people use the language
  - recognising the types of things people use language for
  - acknowledging the things students most often talk about
  - noting the things that students say frequently.
- Discuss the social functions of oral language. Brainstorm a list, e.g. give or ask permission, greet, invite, accept or refuse, apologise, express feelings, request something, ask someone to do something, request information, respond, negotiate, encourage, express needs, interrupt, give and receive messages or information, thank (Oliver et al 2005).
- Brainstorm a list of how language can be used for learning, e.g. challenging others' ideas, expressing an opinion, exchanging views, solving problems, agreeing or disagreeing, making suggestions, building on others' ideas, seeking information, giving feedback, giving or following instructions, clarifying, confirming, negotiating or evaluating, reporting, describing, explaining, summarising, comparing or classifying as students tell their own story, retell a story or recount an event (Oliver et al 2005).
- Describe and discuss what sociolinguistic competence is, and how it can be improved, e.g. shifting style according to the formality of the situation, or according to the context and status of those involved in the interaction; giving information in small chunks if somebody is recording it; knowing how to repair a communication breakdown.
- Discuss how awareness of pragmatic factors influences the way we communicate. Pragmatics studies the factors that decide our choice of language in social interaction. It looks at the social rules that affect our choice, the meaning of speech acts and the intention of the speaker. Pragmatics includes information about the social status of the speakers, cultural features such as politeness and formality, and explicit and implicit linguistic features. Emphasise how students' competence in these aspects in different social situations improves their ability to communicate effectively and reflects their communicative competence in that situation. Discussions such as these will teach students to reflect on what they are comfortable and familiar with and what they need to learn.
- Explicitly teach the strategies for effective communication so that students know what to do when communication breaks down.
- Identify students' needs.




© Department of Education WA 2013

## Conducting a *Guided Investigation of a Communicative Environment*

- Investigate one aspect of the language used in a communicative environment. The focus could be on the function of language or the vocabulary used, displays of sociolinguistic competence, topics of conversation or patterns of interaction (Oliver et al 2005).
- Decide how data will be collected, e.g. audiotape, videotape, note-taking.
- Review the range of language functions that students observed.
- Reflect and encourage students to describe how language was used in their communicative environment. This will help students' *metalinguistic awareness*, which is knowledge of how language is used around us and our ability to describe it.
- Recognise students' current communicative skills and identify the skills that they will need in the future.

## After *Investigating a Communicative Environment*

- Discuss how awareness of language use enables speakers to be aware of the needs of different audiences, and how this might involve using language that has:
  - a different choice of words, e.g. talking with teachers and principals
  - a different choice of tone, e.g. talking with visitors to your home or school
  - a different choice of pace and loudness, e.g. talking with grandparents or older people.
- Discuss how awareness of language requires the speaker to be aware of language behaviour, e.g. body language, eye contact, non-verbal communication. This includes the language behaviour to show that you are interested and that you are listening, e.g. looking at the speaker and nodding or saying 'Mmmm' and 'Yes'.
- Discuss how our familiarity or unfamiliarity with a topic can hinder effective communication (thus reducing our sociolinguistic competence).
- Discuss how some transactions are formulaic and brief in contexts such as requesting something from an unknown person in the street. They usually take the form of a set of phrases in a particular sequence with closed questions that anticipate brief replies, e.g.

  Person A: Excuse me, but ...
  Person B: [Makes eye contact]
  Person A: ... you have the time?
  Person B: Sorry, no watch.
  Person A: Thanks anyway.


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

- Discuss how other transactions are more protracted, such as selecting something in a shop. These interactions are noticeably more open, less predictable and more personal, e.g.
  Seller: Who's next?
  Buyer: I think I am. I'll have ten oranges and a kilo of bananas, please.
  Seller: Yes, anything else?
  Buyer: Yes, I want some strawberries, but these don't look very ripe.
  Seller: Oh they're ripe all right. They're just that colour, a greeny pink.
  Buyer: Mmm, I see. Will they be okay for this evening?
  Seller: Oh yeah, they'll be fine; I had some yesterday and they are good, very sweet and fresh.
  Buyer: Oh, all right then, I'll take two.
  Seller: You'll like them, 'cause they're good. Will that be all?
  Buyer: Yeah, thank you,
  Seller: That will be ten dollars seventy thanks.
  Buyer: I can give you the seventy cents.
  Seller: Yeah, okay, thanks; ten, ten is twenty. Thank you. Have a nice day.
  Buyer: See ya. (Based on Halliday and Hasan 1985)
- Identify students' needs. Be explicit about the particular linguistic and pragmatic behaviours that students will need to know in order to achieve the planned outcomes, then plan a learning program.

## Ideas for Assessment

Investigating Language in a Communicative Environment enables the teacher to observe students investigating, learning and discussing the use of authentic oral language in real contexts. Through listening to students' converations and discussions, teachers can gather valuable information about the class; they can also gather information about the proficiency of groups and individuals with different language functions, the vocabulary required, the patterns of interaction and the expected accompanying behaviours.

***Reflecting on the Effective Use of Investigating Language in a Communicative Environment***

- Did I help students develop their ability to interact in an appropriate way in the communicative context?
- Did I work to improve students' sociolinguistic competence?
- Did I prepare students for future communicative situations?
- Did I provide opportunities for students to develop their oral language vocabulary?
- Did I identify students' needs, then plan a learning program accordingly?




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Scaffolding

**Definition:** Scaffolding is the essential but temporary support structures that teachers provide to assist students to develop new understandings, new concepts and new abilities (Hammond & Gibbons 2001).

## Description

Scaffolding is the temporary assistance that teachers provide to help students complete a task or develop new understandings that will enable them to complete similar tasks alone. Scaffolding is designed to help learners work with increasing independence, so that new skills and understandings can be applied in new contexts. Scaffolding allows students to know not only what to do, but to know how to think and do. The scaffolding is withdrawn as the learner develops control of the new skills. The teacher then provides further support for extended or new tasks, understandings and concepts (Hammond & Gibbons, cited Hammond 2001). Interactions between the student and the teacher are the key to success in teaching and learning; they are mediated through language as the teacher and student jointly construct shared understanding and knowledge.

## Key Features

- Specific help that enables students to achieve tasks that would not be possible without support (Jones, cited Hammond 2001).
- Provides a means of supporting students to achieve their goals.
- Provides quality cognitive support and guidance to support student learning.
- Timely instruction at point of need; the 'teachable moment' can be identified and student potential maximised.
- Temporary in nature.
- Support is withdrawn as learners become able to complete the task independently.
- Challenging and supportive.
- Focuses on meaning and responding to meaning; this enables students to 'make meaning' from the grammar and structure of what was said (Gibbons 2002).

## Benefits for Students

- Students are challenged and extended in what they can do.
- Students learn *how* to think, not simply *what* to think; they go


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

beyond learning items of knowledge to being able to use that knowledge in other contexts.

- 'Assisted performance' leads learners to reach beyond what they are able to achieve alone and enables them to tackle future tasks in new contexts (Gibbons 2002, Hammond 2001).
- Helps students to internalise knowledge and connect it with other knowledge, allowing them to understand new concepts and ideas, known as 'deep knowledge' (Jones in Hammond 2001).

## Suggestions for Scaffolding in the Classroom

### Planning for *Scaffolding*

- Focus on how the learning will be sequenced.
- Focus on *what* will be scaffolded and *how* it will be scaffolded.
- Focus on determining what activities will be included, and why.
- Focus on the points where students' attention will be directed to the patterns and choices of language that demonstrate how educational knowledge is constructed.
- Focus on 'point of need' scaffolding, e.g. how to help students make explicit connections to previous experiences and to future goals.
- At the beginning of an activity, focus on developing a thorough understanding of what students do and do not know. Use wallpapering to collect ideas about students' current knowledge. (Give groups of students small sheets of paper to write down one thing they know about the topic. Then stick the pieces of paper on the classroom walls so that students can walk around, look at and comment on each others' ideas [Gibbons 2002].)
- Have a good understanding of the curriculum area or field of inquiry that the learners are engaging with.
- Understand the demands of the specific tasks that will enable learners to achieve relevant goals.
- Have clearly articulated goals. Structure learning activities so that learners can extend their current understandings, setting this micro level within the broader framework of program and curriculum goals, which Hammond (2001) refers to as a 'macro level'.
- Focus on the learning of some specific skill or concept.
- Build field knowledge by making connections to existing knowledge, referring to shared experience or providing relevant simulation experiences.

### Conducting *Guided Scaffolding*

- Sequence learning activities.
- Effective teaching is not only providing room for learner initiative, but also providing additional support if the learner begins to falter.




© Department of Education WA 2013

Make sure that the use of teaching strategies is relevant to students' current level of understandings. Effective teachers are characterised by how well they are able to judge the need and quality of the assistance required by the learner, and how to pace the assistance based on students' evolving understandings, which Van Lier refers to as 'contingency'. This 'contingent pacing' is evident in the way the teacher decides at which points particular students are challenged, others are supported and when they decide to withdraw support altogether so that students can work independently (Van Lier 1996, cited Hammond 2001).

- Help students to develop appropriate technical vocabulary by repeating students' remarks, or by recasting or appropriation. **Recasting** is acknowledging a student's comment and then modifying it to make it more appropriate (Gibbons 2002). **Appropriation** is transforming the information offered. Appropriation operates at a deeper level than recasting, as the teacher takes up the idea behind the student's remark and offers it back in a more technically appropriate way (Newman, Griffin & Cole 1994, cited Hammond 2001).
- Ask questions that push students to provide extended or reformulated responses. Encourage further elaboration by extending the teacher–student dialogue beyond the typical **Initiation**, **Response**, **Feedback** (IRF) exchange. A typical IRF exchange is:
  (I) Teacher: What is a shark?
  (R) Student: A fish.
  (F) Teacher: Right.
  Student learning can be deepened by asking a follow-up question that requires the student to engage in further talk. This allows teachers to support students as they assimilate new information into their current understanding. An extension to the previous feedback response could be:
  Teacher: Right. What else do you know about sharks?
  This question requires students to extend their thinking, and gives the teacher the opportunity to guide students in the co-construction of knowledge (Sharpe, cited Hammond 2001).
- Use a range of modalities to enhance language interactions and understandings, e.g. visual aids, writing on a whiteboard, gestures, voice cues, shared experience of work in progress (Sharpe, cited Hammond 2001).
- Stimulate students' responses through questioning, elaborating and redefining the requirements of an activity; use the pronoun 'we' to show shared experience (Mercer, cited Sharpe in Hammond 2001).


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

- Draw students along a line of reasoning.
- Design learning activities that provide opportunities for students to assimilate new ideas and transform their learning.
- Recast the dialogue or slow down its pace so that students have the opportunity to explicitly formulate what they want to say (Gibbons 2002).

### After *Scaffolding*

- Provide opportunities for students to reflect on what they have learnt and to reformulate their own talk by writing in a journal (Gibbons 2002).

## Ideas for Assessment

Scaffolding enables the teacher to question, observe and confer with students as they speak, and to record what students can achieve with assistance. The teacher can then use this information to plan future learning activities that will support and extend each student.

| ***Reflecting on the Effective Use of Scaffolding in the Classroom*** |
|---|
| • Did I provide specific help that enabled students to achieve tasks that would have not been possible otherwise?<br>• Did I focus on the learning of some specific skill or concept?<br>• Did I ask questions that pushed students to provide extended or reformulated responses?<br>• Did I ask follow-up questions to engage students in further talk? |

**Figure 1.6 Scaffolding Allows Teachers To Focus On Point Of Need**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Small-Group Inquiry

**Definition:** A planning cycle for small-group learning, where students work through a sequence of stages in groups of four: engagement, exploration, transformation, presentation and reflection.

## Description

This sequence provides a framework for planning a lesson, a series of lessons or an entire unit of work (Reid, Green & English 2002). The purpose of each stage is to make certain that students can progress from receiving information towards understanding what is being taught (adapted from Barnes 1975, cited Reid et al 2002). The process of small-group inquiry enables students to personalise knowledge and understandings. The sequence of stages is:

- Engagement
- Exploration
- Transformation
- Presentation
- Reflection

### *Engagement*

Engagement is the stage where students gather new information, or participate in an experience that provides the basis of their ensuing learning. The teacher's main role at this stage is to engage students' curiosity in the problem or dilemma, to help students understand why they are exploring a particular topic, text, information or material, and to help them understand what they are expected to learn or achieve. Murdoch (2004) suggests it is important for the inquiry to involve real people, real places, real objects and real stories so that students are engaged emotionally. Establishing students' prior knowledge and understandings is an important feature of this stage.

### *Exploration*

Students work in small groups during the exploration stage, with enough time to explore and make sense of any new ideas or information through talk only. This stage should encourage thinking aloud as students negotiate and seize ideas; talk is often tentative and hesitant, and students can fall back on their home language if using Standard Australian English reduces their ability to express themselves. The teacher's role in this stage is to be a careful observer, listener and learner; to identify areas of need and reflect on how they will be addressed in the sequence of the teaching/learning cycle. These could be whole-class, small-group or individual needs.


© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Transformation*

Transformation is the stage where students work with the new information to construct a deeper understanding of it. Transformation activities, e.g. clarification, ordering, reorganising and elaborating, are carefully selected so that students use or practise the new knowledge in a purposeful way, reflecting on the identified learning outcomes. The teacher's role at this stage is active; it involves guiding, teaching and monitoring students' learning, providing additional information and correcting any misconceptions in response to individual and group needs.

### *Presentation*

The presentation stage is when ideas are presented to an interested and critical audience, and students explain and elaborate on what they have learned. Presentation provides a degree of tension, as well as giving a sense of purpose to the group work completed (Reid et al 2002). Students can be asked to present in different ways: pairs telling pairs, small groups 'doubling up' to form larger groups, one representative speaking from each of four different working groups, etc. Presentations can be made to wider audiences such as other classes, parents and the whole school. Presentations can also be more formal, although this depends on the stated learning outcomes.

### *Reflection*

Reflection is the final stage in the cycle. It is an important stage, as it gives students an opportunity to reflect on the learning process and on their understanding of the content. Students can develop more in-depth reflection on how they learn over time.

## Key Features

- Students work in groups of four.
- Curriculum content is constructed through talk (Jones 1996).
- Concepts and ideas become known and understood through interactions between people, texts and artefacts (Jones 1996).
- Talk is a tool for thinking and communicating in subject-specific ways.

## Benefits for Students

- Students are engaged in speaking and listening for authentic purposes.
- Students assume responsibility to think, solve problems and evaluate the outcomes of their efforts in realistic ways.


© Department of Education WA 2013

- Students make choices regarding what they learn, how they learn and how they will share their learning.
- Students are able to make choices and practise skills in a supportive environment; they should realise that learning requires both effort and a measure of challenge.

# Suggestions for Small-Group Inquiry in the Classroom

## Planning for *Small-Group Inquiry*

- Understand what small groups can do.
- Plan how you will use small groups in the classroom and organise the classroom furniture accordingly.
- Develop students' understandings about how small groups operate.
- Foster group skills among students. Reid et al (2002) suggest using carefully structured questions to assist this process.
- Discuss the language required to successfully work in small groups, distinguishing between language used for social interaction and language used for learning.
- Identify what language is needed for effective group interaction. Identify students' competencies, then identify the skills, understandings and values that students need to work more productively.

## Conducting *Small-Group Inquiry*

### *Engagement and Exploratory Stages*

- Arouse real intellectual curiosity and a sense of purpose.
- Engage students' attention in the introductory phase.
- Present new content material in a way that will stimulate interest.
- Link unknown material to known material.
- Encourage prediction and hypothesising.
- Provide a structured overview.
- Demonstrate or model new skills.
- Encourage students to reflect on what they have learnt.
- Review students' progress and point to further directions.
- Pose organising questions.
- Teach component skills where needed (Boomer 1999).
- Constantly model and facilitate the development of speaking and listening skills and provide new information as necessary.

### *Transformation and Presentation Stages*

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity, so that students can judge the effectiveness of their thinking, discussion and the end product, e.g. text, performance, artefact, website, diagram, model, etc.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Make sure that the activities set provide opportunities for students to synthesise, hypothesise and generalise.
- Keep all students equal participants in the group by not appointing any group leaders. This improves the group's sense of identify as they explore a problem, and encourages shared leadership (Reid et al 2002).
- Keep recording as a collective responsibility by not appointing a group recorder. Note-taking is a useful process for all group members to develop, and should be used as an aid to learning and as a prompt for sharing information with other groups (Reid et al 2002).
- Allow students to work individually when necessary (Reid et al 2002).
- Recognise that talk is more formal in the Transformation and Presentation stages, and that Standard Australian English is the preferred mode of communication (Reid et al 2002).
- Teach students to think of presentation talk as 'final-draft talk' (Barnes, cited Reid et al 2002). Emphasise that at this stage students should be well prepared and fluent in what they have to say (Reid et al 2002).

## After *Small-Group Inquiry*

- Make time for reflection so that students become aware of how they learn.
- Encourage groups to pause when they encounter difficulties or when they are not demonstrating social courtesies.
- Model reflective practice.
- Encourage students to assume some responsibility for their learning through the use of self-assessment checklists. The criteria used should be explicit and jointly constructed by teacher and students, e.g. students could identify characteristics of effective and ineffective group work by reviewing a video of a group discussion. Display these lists on the wall and encourage students to use them to assess their own language use (Derewianka 1995).
- Make students aware that some students work more slowly than others and tasks need to be allocated accordingly. Also make sure students are aware of any time constraints, so that they can organise to complete their work on time.
- Reflect on the language needed for effective group interaction. Share students' competencies, then reflect on and identify the skills, understanding and values that students need to develop to work more productively.
- Identify what students can currently do. Then identify what students need to be able to do, then think about the difference




© Department of Education WA 2013

between what they can do and what they need to be able to do. Design a way to teach and assess the skills that cover the gap (Oliver et al 2005).

- Be explicit about the rules and assumptions that direct what people do, say and think when participating in particular discourse communities, e.g. a scientific discourse, conversational discourse, speculative or exploratory discourse. Immerse students in situations that require participating and interacting in a range of social discourses so that they gain mastery over how to behave, talk and dress in these situations. These need explicit teaching and instruction, e.g. a teenager entering a RSL club with his grandfather begins to learn how to behave in this situation when he is told to take off his baseball cap (Reid et al 2002).

## Ideas for Assessment

Small-Group Inquiry sessions provide opportunities to observe and record students' participation as speakers and listeners, and to assess their contribution to group learning. Recording students' comments, queries and questions and their group interactive skills allows teachers to address individual strengths and needs in future teaching and learning programs. Observations can be recorded by anecdote, checklist, rubric, oral methods or a video recording.

***Reflecting on Using Small-Group Inquiry***

- Did students use different types of speaking and listening throughout the inquiry process?
- Did I take the opportunity to observe and assess students' speaking and listening skills as they were involved in the inquiry process?
- Did I utilise the 'teachable' moments that arose throughout the inquiry process?




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

# Embedding Speaking and Listening within the Classroom

Speaking and listening can be planned, taught and assessed in these ways:

- In timetabled speaking and listening sessions.
- Integrated into classroom activities.
- As part of other activities when 'teachable moments' occur.
- Integrated as focus areas into units of work.

## Focusing on Use of Texts in a Unit of Work

There are several ways of embedding speaking and listening into units of work: using an inquiry approach, negotiating with students, or using teacher-structured units of work. It is practical and purposeful to include speaking and listening as part of the learning for units of work, as it extends the opportunities for using the functions of language across the school day. However, as with all planning and teaching, it is important to ensure that a balance of purposes, audiences and situations occurs across the year.

Different units of work will be more suited to developing one or more of the four aspects of speaking and listening: use of texts, contextual understanding, conventions, processes and strategies.

Units of work can be developed for different learning areas with different emphases on speaking and listening. Teachers can plan units of work to:

- develop a particular learning area focus alongside a general speaking and listening focus
- develop particular speaking and listening skills or understandings based on students' identified needs
- develop particular speaking and listening skills needed for a required school or community situation, e.g. assembly, visits from parents, visiting speakers, buddy-class sessions, in the workplace. See the CD-ROM for the proforma, 'Teacher Planning Checklist'.

Units of work that use the inquiry process allow students to use a variety of spoken texts and functions. Teachers can use and modify frameworks, as shown in the inquiry units of work 'Earth and Beyond' designed by Jenny Moulton, a teacher in a Western Australian semi-rural school, for her Year 6/7 class.




© Department of Education WA 2013

Jenny planned her unit of work using an inquiry model, shown in Figure 1.7. Students began by posing their own questions and using task cards to stimulate their thinking, as shown in Figure 1.8.

**Inquiry Process**

Pose or select a question. Answer the question by following these steps.

**PLAN**

1. What is the question asking? What do we need to find out?
2. What resources will we use? What kind of framework will we use to collect data?

**RESEARCH**

3. Find definitions.
4. Note-take: extract information using dot points and key words.
5. Explain examples.

**PROCESS INFORMATION**

6. Analyse the gathered data.
7. Group data together based on criteria.
8. What is relevant and what helps us answer the question?
9. What do we still need to find out?

**PRESENTATION**

10. Plan the presentation of our report: select from PowerPoint presentations, movies, posters, picture books, reports, role-plays, songs. What is the best way to present our findings?
11. Draft, edit, revise and publish the report.
12. Acknowledge references.
13. Present the report to the class.

**EVALUATION**

14. What was my share of the work? Why?
15. What group skills did I use? What skills do I need to improve on?
16. Did our presentation answer the question?
17. What understandings have I gained through this process?

**Figure 1.7 Inquiry Model**




© Department of Education WA 2013

## Science in Practice

1. Describe ways in which information is gathered about the earth and its resources, such as environmental monitoring and the use of weather balloons and satellites.
2. What do different scientists do?
3. Explain the role of the Bureau of Meteorology.

## Catastrophic Events

1. Describe causes of catastrophic events (such as earthquakes, cyclones and tidal waves).
2. Report on the effect these events have on people's lives.
3. Explain the movements under the earth and the faulting and folding processes.

## Volcanoes

1. Describe parts of volcanoes.
2. Describe how volcanoes form.
3. Describe some changes that take place in volcanic areas.

## Features of the Universe

1. What is the universe made up of?
2. Compare components and features of the universe.

## Asteroids, Comets and Meteors

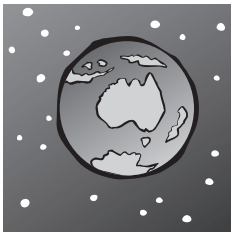
Compare and contrast asteroids, comets and meteors in terms of size and frequency.

## Earth Processes

Describe processes that shape the local landscape, such as weathering, erosion and deposition.

## Planets

Identify similarities and differences between planets.



## Seasons

1. Describe the seasons.
2. Describe the effects seasons have on the environment.
3. Describe the effects seasons have on people's lives.

**Figure 1.8 Task Cards**




© Department of Education WA 2013

In her planning, Jenny focused on a science outcome, then linked it with speaking and listening. There was a natural focus on speaking and listening as the students worked in small groups following the inquiry process, which involved research, preparation and presentation of their reports to the class. The focus outcomes for the unit of work 'Earth and Beyond' are shown in Figure 1.9.

| **Class – Year Six and Seven** | **Focus Outcomes for *Earth and Beyond*** | | **August 2005** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Science Outcomes: Earth and Beyond** | | **English Outcomes: Listening and Speaking** | |
| Students describe ways in which information is gathered about the earth and its resources, such as environmental monitoring and the use of weather balloons and satellites. They identify what different scientists do and study the role of organisations such as the Bureau of Meteorology.<br>Direct link: *Science in Practice* | They describe the interaction and changes in the atmosphere, the interior of the earth and events on the earth's surface. They describe how weathering and degradation of old buildings occurs and how buildings are designed to suit conditions. | **Use of Texts**<br>Give brief reports and summarise information (L3).<br>Participate in problem-solving discussions with peers where they recognise problems and offer solutions, express opinions and share ideas (L3).<br>Develop and present familiar information with some detail in a variety of classroom settings (L4).<br>Offer explanations that show clearly why phenomena occur (L4). | **Contextual Understanding**<br>Recognise and use forms of spoken text associated with particular contexts and purposes (L3).<br>Modify elements of speaking and listening for different purposes and audiences (L3).<br>Consider appropriateness of text form and register in relation to their audience (L4).<br>Consider the needs of a familiar audience (L4). |
| They describe parts of volcanoes, how they form and some changes that take place in volcanic areas. They describe causes of other catastrophic events (such as earthquakes, cyclones and tidal waves) and report on the effect they have on people's lives, such as explaining the movements under the earth and faulting and folding processes.<br>Direct link: *Catastrophic Events, Volcanoes* | They compare components and features of the universe.<br>Direct link: *Features of the Universe* | **Conventions**<br>Apply the listening behaviours appropriate to class and school situations (L3).<br>Observe social conventions for speaking (L3).<br>Acknowledge and respond appropriately to contributions or responses from others (L4).<br>Communicate information clearly, and use devices to engage the audience (L4). | **Processes and Strategies**<br>Aware of appropriate social conventions and try to adapt oral language to improve communication in familiar settings (L3).<br>Listen with a purpose, identify the speaker's topic, ask questions and seek explanations or more information (L3).<br>Aware of the value of thinking about, planning and rehearsing speaking for particular audiences and purposes (L4).<br>Listen and respond constructively to others, asking questions to clarify understandings or elicit additional information (L4). |
| They describe the seasons and the effects they have on the environment and people's lives.<br>Direct link: *Seasons* | They compare and contrast asteroids, comets and meteors, in terms of, for example, size and frequency.<br>Direct link: *Asteroids, Comets and Meteors* | | |
| They describe processes which shape the local landscape, such as weathering, erosion and deposition.<br>Direct link: *Earth Processes* | They identify similarities and differences between planets.<br>Direct link: *Planets* | | |

**Figure 1.9 Focus Outcomes for 'Earth and Beyond'**




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

For 'Earth and Beyond' it was important for Jenny to plan for small groups, or learning teams, as shown in Figure 1.10.

| Plan for Learning Teams and Learning Centres | |
|---|---|
| **Set-up**<br>Eight centres comprising books, activity cards and activities.<br>$1\frac{1}{2}$ hours per week (1 session).<br>Arrange desks in groups. | **Groups**<br>Six groups of four, two groups of three.<br>Mixed-ability groupings.<br>Roles in each activity. |
| **Roles**<br>Reporter (red)<br>Recorder (green)<br>Manager (blue)<br>Go for (yellow) | **Assessment**<br>Determine elements of aspects to be assessed<br>Review of aspects in authentic task: article for school science journal<br>Self-assessment of group skills<br>Peer assessment of group skills<br>Overall judgement on level of achievement |
| **Tasks**<br>Tasks designed as questions students must answer in steps, using resources and cooperative skills.<br>Students show their understandings by completing activities and projects and presenting their findings to the class. | **Role of Teacher**<br>Support students in inquiry process.<br>Supply a range of relevant resources including the Internet.<br>Keep groups on-task and refocus where necessary. Set time limits for tasks.<br>Facilitate sharing of information and understandings. |
| **Inquiry Process**<br>1. What do we need to find out?<br>2. What resources can we use?<br>3. How will we find information – key words searches, library reference, Internet, skimming, scanning, using the index.<br>4. Collect data.<br>5. Analyse the data: What information do we need? What does it mean?<br>6. How will we present our findings? | **Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Process**<br>1. Were the students engaged in their learning?<br>2. What learning outcomes were achieved by students?<br>3. Was this method of delivery effective?<br>4. What needs 'tweaking' in regard to the learning centres? |

**Figure 1.10**




© Department of Education WA 2013

When considering opportunities for using the functions of language in the 'Earth and Beyond' unit of work, it soon became apparent that students were able to use all the functions, as shown in Figure 1.11. This was partly because Jenny included these key interactive components:

- Learning Teams: group roles, shared product
- Inquiry approach: planning, researching, processing information and presenting with others.

| Reasons people communicate | Examples of opportunities to develop this function in this unit of work |
|---|---|
| Getting things done | Working on the tasks in small groups: setting up the task, organising materials and equipment, completing the set tasks, keeping a record of what tasks have been completed, packing away |
| Influencing the behaviour, feelings or attitudes of others | Posing own questions or selecting a question<br>Deciding what information to include<br>Deciding how to present the information for the formal presentation |
| Getting along with others | Small-group work: reviewing previous work, allocating tasks, discussing the sharing of materials |
| Expressing individuality and personal feelings | Decision-making in task preparation for research and presentation<br>Reflection |
| Seeking and learning about the social and physical environment | Conducting the research about the group's question<br>Sharing, discussing and clarifying information with each other |
| Creating stories, games, new worlds and new texts | Preparing a presentation for the class to share new information (new texts included formal talks guided by PowerPoint, film, charts and models) |
| Communicating information | Small-group interaction<br>Formal presentation<br>One-to-one interaction between teacher and student<br>Group 'round-up' informing the teacher what the group had been working on, what help they required and their future plans |
| Entertaining others | Socialising with group: setting-up and packing-away time<br>Including visual aids and anecdotes in formal presentation |

**Figure 1.11 The 'Earth And Beyond' Unit of Work Provided Opportunities for Students to Use All Functions of Language**

The benefits of such an approach also included the opportunity to observe students' skills in science and speaking and listening. A record of achievement was also provided by student self-assessment, film footage of working in small group, and students' presentations and samples, as shown in Figures 1.12 and 1.13.

One student, Tayla, recorded her information in a table, as shown in Figure 1.12. Tayla then used the table as the basis for her discussion with her group.



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

| order from sun | colour | Moons | Rings or no Rings | temperature | Rotate/orbit | Size/Diametre | Facts | distance from Sun |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mercury | Brown | 0 | no rings | 180° | Y-0.2408 D-54.646 | 4,870 km | Hotest Plants. | 58,000,000 km |
| Venus | orangy yellow | 0 | no rings | 460° | YS-0.6152 D-243.019 | 12,100 km | | 107,500,000 km |
| Earth | Blue/ green/ orange | 1 | no Rings | 14° | YS-356.25 Days-23.58 | 12,742 | | 150,000,000 km |
| mars | Red | 2 | no rings | -50° | YS-1.8818 D-1.026 | 6,790 | | 227,800,000 km |
| Jupiter | orange red yellow | 16 | Rings | -150 | YS-11.86 D-0.4101 | Biggest 142,500 km | Biggest gas planet | 780,420,000 km |
| Saturn | yellow orange | 24 | Rings | -180° | YS-29.42 0.4440 Days- | 120 000 km 2 | gas planet | 1,431,000,000 km |
| uranus | Blue/ green | 15 | Rings | -210 | YS-85.75 D-0.7183 | 52,000 km | | 2,877,000,000 km |
| Neptune | Blue | 2 | Rings | -220 | YS-163.73 D-0.6712 | 50000 km | | 4,486,000,000 km |
| Pluto. | Brown | 1 | no rings | -230 | YS-248.03 D-6.3872 | smallest 6,400 km | Pluto is the coldest Plant | 5,930,000,000 km |

**Figure 1.12 Tayla's Information Table**

Several groups used PowerPoint as a feature of their demonstrations, as shown in Figure 1.13.

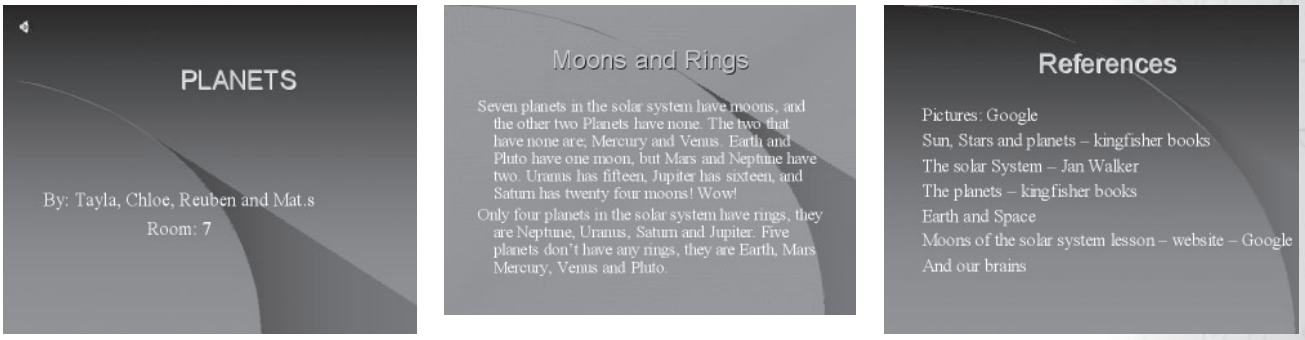



**Figure 1.13 Student PowerPoint Displays**

Jenny considers that teachers using a similar inquiry approach should do the following:

- Ensure that group skills are explicitly taught throughout the year, from basic group skills such as taking turns, through to higher skills such as negotiation.
- Provide ample resources so that students can work independently to enable small-group teaching.
- Videotape sections of the process as well as the product. When students can view themselves in the informal group situation, it helps them to reflect on their behaviour and improves their ability to work with others.
- Involve students in reflection at the end of each session, as well as at the end of the final presentation.




© Department of Education WA 2013

Jenny made sure that students had ongoing support in their group skills, guiding groups when necessary, referring them to the previous activities and allowing them to build on their existing group skills. Jenny needed to conduct mini-lessons for some groups, to teach them strategies for negotiation and strategies for using the group roles. She had negotiated explicit guidelines for Learning Team Roles with her students in previous sessions. These guidelines were listed and displayed in the classroom, and proved useful in the mini-lessons with some students, as shown in Figure 1.14.

### Manager

I keep group members on task.

I help the group to make decisions.

I organise the group.

I make sure everybody gets heard.

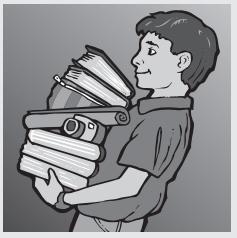
I have input and make suggestions.

### Supporter

I collect all the equipment we need.

I keep our materials organised and safe.

I participate in all activities and cooperate.



### Reporter

I share our work and ideas with the class.

I make sure our oral presentations are organised and effective.

I participate and cooperate in all activities.

### Recorder

I write down people's ideas and take notes.

I acknowledge in writing who and where ideas and information come from.

I make sure our information is recorded correctly.

I participate in all activities and cooperate.

**Figure 1.14 Learning Team Roles**




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

SECTION 2

# The Functions of Oral Language

The purpose of language is to communicate needs, wants, ideas, information and feelings. Like writing, speaking also has a variety of genres. These genres are related to the purpose of the talk. The purposes or functions of language have been categorised in a variety of ways. The best-known functions, and among the most widely cited, are Halliday's communication functions, as listed in Figure 1.15.

## Halliday's Functions of Oral Language

| Function | This Sort of Language Helps Us to: | Classroom Experiences or Genres |
|---|---|---|
| **Instrumental:** 'I want'.<br>*Language as a means of getting things and satisfying material needs.* | • Identify things<br>• Seek and provide information<br>• Request assistance | Problem-solving<br>Gathering materials<br>Role-playing |
| **Personal:** 'Here I come'.<br>*Expressing individuality, awareness of self, pride.* | • Elaborate and give detailed recounts of experiences<br>• Express and respond to ideas and opinions<br>• Express agreement and disagreement<br>• Seek, give and deny permission to do something<br>• Express approval or disapproval for a service provided | Making feelings public<br>Interacting with others<br>Interest Talks |
| **Interactional:** 'Me and you'.<br>*Getting along with others, establishing relative status.*<br>Also 'Me against you'.<br>*Establishing separateness.*<br><br>*Using language to interact and plan, develop or maintain a play or group activity.* | • Greet or welcome people<br>• Meet or introduce people<br>• Take leave of somebody<br>• Attract attention<br>• Congratulate<br>• Sustain conversations with familiar and unfamiliar people<br>• Meet social obligations when working in groups<br>• Use language to settle disputes<br>• Use appropriate tone and manner with peers<br>• Explore challenging ideas<br>• Interrupt appropriately<br>• Negotiate | Structured play<br>Dialogues and discussions<br>Talking in groups<br>Substantive conversations<br>Role-plays and scenarios |




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

| Function | This sort of language helps us to: | Classroom Experiences or Genres |
|---|---|---|
| **Regulatory:** 'Do as I tell you'. *Controlling the behaviour and feelings of others.* | • Give information or correct factual information<br>• Persuade others<br>• Give specific logical instructions in a variety of contexts for different audiences | Making rules in games<br>Giving Instructions<br>Teaching<br>Constructing persuasive texts |
| **Representational:** 'I've got something to tell you'. *Communicating information, descriptions, expressing propositions.* | • Tell about the real world<br>• Express a proposition<br>• Report about things using description or narrative<br>• Convey messages | Oral Reports<br>Class Meetings<br>Debates<br>Procedures<br>Radio Scripts |
| **Heuristic:** 'Tell me why?' *Seeking and testing knowledge.* | • Use a range of questions<br>• Respond to questions appropriately<br>• Select the most effective type of question to get the required information<br>• Express and find out intellectual ideas<br>• Hypothesise and experiment | Question and answer routines<br>Inquiry and research<br>Discussions<br>Interviews<br>Exploratory talk<br>Extending students' repertoire of question types<br>Oral Histories<br>Investigating |
| **Imaginative:** 'Let's pretend'. *Creating new worlds, making up stories and poems.* | • Perform<br>• Recite<br>• Puppetry | Stories and dramatisations<br>Rhymes, poems and riddles<br>Nonsense and word-play<br>Storytelling<br>Performances<br>Recitations<br>Drama<br>Skits<br>Puppetry<br>Readers' Theatre |

**Bold text** indicates spoken genre with identified schematic structure.

**Figure 1.15** (Table format adapted from www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/ela/speaking0.1html)

It is important when tackling the functions of language to give consideration to:

- the range of different social contexts of language:
  - informal or formal
  - familiar or unfamiliar.
- the range of cultural contexts for language:
  - local
  - community
  - institutional.
- the possible participants in a conversation:
  - people who are known or unknown
  - students
  - peers
  - adults.


FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

Next, the particular function of language must be considered (Oliver et al 2004). It is also useful to make a distinction between talk as a *process* and talk as *performance*, as shown in Figure 1.16 (Jones 1996):

| Talk as a Process | Talk as Performance |
|---|---|
| Collaborative problem solving | Morning news |
| Joint text constructions | Sports report |
| Class discussions | Debating |
| Individual writing conferences | Telling jokes and anecdotes |
| Brainstorming and listing | Dramatic presentations |
| Giving directions and instructions | Retelling |
| Construction activities | Storytelling |
| Board games | Delivering oral messages |
| Writers' or Readers' circle | Thanking a guest speaker |

**Figure 1.16**

*Talk as performance* refers to more formal activities, when learners speak to an audience. *Talk as process* refers to the use of talk for learning, cooperating with each other and forming social relationships.

Students need to develop the linguistic resources to engage with a variety of situations, or *registers*. Register refers to the different formal, informal, social and educational situations that students will encounter. In any situation the purpose of the interaction has a major influence on the language used. Competent speakers and listeners vary their choice of language according to:

- the role that spoken language is playing in the interaction, e.g. the language used to explain and play a board game is different from the language used to tell a funny story
- the topic or activity being talked about
- the roles and relationships between the speakers
- the relationship between the speaker and the audience.

The difference in register can be considered in terms of the three register components: **field**, **tenor** and **mode**, as shown in Figure 1.17.

## *Field*

Field refers to who or what is being talked about. At school, students are expected to participate in spoken language activities centred on various curriculum topics, on social relationships and on




© Department of Education WA 2013

learning itself. Topics vary from the familiar to the more abstract. This progression requires access to a specialised vocabulary, to ways of thinking such as cause–effect and contrastive relationships, clarifying or checking understandings, and to the kind of language used to discuss language and literacy (which is referred to as *metalanguage*).

### *Tenor*

Tenor is the relationship between the speaker and listener. For example, at school, students have to learn to be a member of a large group and to work collaboratively with others. Acquiring these skills means learning the language of negotiation.

### *Mode*

Mode is the type of text being produced. At school, students engage in spoken language activities that range from familiar embedded activities, e.g. building with construction blocks or discussing a science experiment, to tasks that require reflective language that emphasises aspects of audience, purpose and form, e.g. formal debates, oral reports (Jones 1996 & Derewianka 1995).

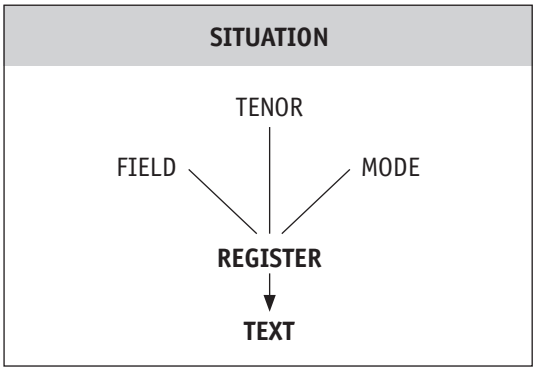



**Figure 1.17 Adapted from Derewianka's Genre Model (Derewianka 1990)**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Developing Communicative Competence in the Functions of Language

The majority of spoken texts are dynamic, fluid and interactive, as meaning is constructed jointly by the participants. Because of this, many spoken texts serve several functions at the same time. Understanding how a range of oral texts work is also part of learning about talk. Using the range appropriately gives us ways to communicate our meanings more fully with others.

To communicate with ease in social and academic contexts, students need to understand and know how the range of oral language texts will operate in different contexts. Each oral text has its own conventions for particular purposes and audiences. These conventions determine the way we present ideas, opinions and information. Teachers need to establish classroom structures and procedures that allow students to develop their understandings of the different forms that oral language texts take, as well as providing opportunities for students to use these forms for different purposes.

Developing competence in using the functions of language involves learning *through* language as well as learning *about* language. Students develop topic knowledge in all areas of the curriculum *through* speaking and listening. They also learn *about* spoken language by learning how to organise their speaking, choosing vocabulary and non-verbal behaviours that will enhance what they say. It is also important to teach students the words and phrases that are needed to discuss spoken language; this is known as developing *metalanguage*.

This section outlines some of the oral language texts that teachers can use to address the functions of language that students need to control in social and academic contexts. The most efficient way for this to happen is to teach students about different situations and their related language demands (Boomer 1999).

This section contains information on:

- Discussions
- Extended Conversations
- Partner & Small-Group Work
- Oral Reports
- Questioning and Inquiry
- Interviews
- Meetings
- Arguments & Informal Debates
- Interest Talks
- Storytelling and Anecdotes




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Discussions

Partner and group discussions make complex demands on speakers and listeners. Students are required to use language to create cohesion and group unity, to coordinate group activity, and to reach a more complete and objective understanding of the topic. Disagreeing and seeking consensus are also part of the discussion process.

Formal and informal discussions serve both social and learning functions. Students learn acceptable group behaviour through discussion activities. They also have opportunities to communicate their opinions, ideas and understandings.

**Figure 1.18 Students Learn Acceptable Group Behaviour Through Discussion Activities**

## Description

Discussions challenge students to use reasoning, critical thinking and problem-solving skills; they also involve students in generating possible solutions, giving explanations and opinions and making decisions. Students gain practice in expressing their ideas clearly and logically, and in learning to listen and respond to different points of view. See Figure 1.19 for an outline of Discussion text structure and language features.




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

## Discussion Table

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Heuristic:** 'Tell me why?'<br><br>*Seeking and testing knowledge.* | **Discussions** | **Text Structure**<br>• Hypothesising, tentative talk, exploratory talk<br>• Reflection: what do we already know, what connections can we make<br>• Considering possibilities and alternatives<br>• Developing questions that will help progress the discussion<br>**Knowledge Skills and Understandings**<br>• Learn to justify opinions with reasons or examples<br>• Can give reasons and arguments to support their position when they disagree<br>• Understand that meaning is negotiated<br>• Clarifying own and others' opinions<br>• Acknowledging another person's idea; building on another person's idea<br>• Encouraging others to take a risk, to speculate<br>**Language for Social Interaction**<br>• Are able to monitor and evaluate their progress<br>• Accept diverse opinions<br>• Can address the idea rather than the person<br>**Specific Functions of Language**<br>• To present different possibilities at least two points of view about an issue<br>• Form hypotheses<br>• Construct arguments<br>**Language Features**<br>• Material processes, e.g. has produced, have developed<br>• Relational processes, e.g. is, could, have<br>• Mental processes, e.g. feel<br>• Use of conjunctions: comparative, contrastive and consequential<br>**Patterns of Speech and Vocabulary**<br>• Make tentative proposals using such expressions as 'Let's just say,' 'supposed to be,' and 'what if'<br>**Metalinguistic Awareness**<br>• Speakers learn to think aloud, reformulate their positions and revise their points of view based on others' contributions<br>• Understand that it is acceptable to disagree with an idea and know that it has no bearing on liking or disliking a person |

**Figure 1.19**

# Modelling

Teachers need to engage students in real discussions with meaningful topics, and explicitly model the speaking and listening skills required for students to effectively participate in group discussions, e.g. turn-taking, holding the floor, selecting the next speaker. (See 'Conventions' in Chapter 3, page 132 for a full explanation of these terms.) Teachers also need to model how to disagree, giving reasons and arguments to support their position.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Disagreeing Agreeably*

- Encourage students to adopt sentences such as:
  - That could be one way of looking at it, but I was thinking ...
  - I agree with the part about the ... but I disagree with ... because
  - You could look at it another way ...

### *Using Neutral Language*

- Encourage neutral language such as:
  - Some people are forgetting to ...
  - I feel frustrated when ...
  - It might help the class if ...

Teachers will need to explicitly teach discussion skills and to act as facilitator, especially for students in the early phases or with students who have little experience of discussions. For example, the teacher would model some of the roles outlined in Figure 1.20 (adapted from Godinho & Shrimpton 2005) and provide guided practice activities before expecting students to become independently competent in any of these roles.

Students also need to be explicitly taught how to participate in discussions. They need to be taught language patterns and vocabulary they can use when they are attempting to express opinions. These words and phrases could be modelled, written on charts and then displayed in the classroom so that students can refer to them when they are participating in group discussions.

### *Promoting Group Cohesion*

- Invite others to join in, e.g. What do you think, Sam?
- Ask for help, e.g. Sam, I don't understand the question, can you help me?
- Offer help, e.g. Liz, would you like me to write down some of our decisions? We could take turns.
- Give praise and encouragement, e.g. That's a good point, Eric. Could you share that when we report back to the class?
- Joke and make humorous comments.

### *Coordinate Group Activities*

- Call for group attention, e.g. Look at ... .
- Give instructions, e.g. Let's brainstorm some ideas.
- Plan, e.g. If we list the steps, we could make a plan and divide the jobs.
- Negotiate roles, e.g. Who wants to take the clarifying leading role?
- Offer feedback and summarise comments, e.g. That's an interesting point, and so far this group has discussed ... .


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

| Role | Features of the Role | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Facilitator | Asking questions that stimulate deeper level thinking. | What if … ?<br>What would happen if …?<br>What are the possibilities that we could consider?<br>How is this idea different to …? |
| | Encouraging students to extend responses. | Tell us a little more about …<br>Can you think of an example? |
| | Seeking a range of perspectives and points of view. | Who else could we ask about this? Who else might be interested in these ideas? |
| | Summarising different opinions and ideas. | So far, this group has discussed … |
| Participant | Maintaining the flow of talk. | Who would like to start?<br>What do you say, [Tim]?<br>Can anyone add to that idea?<br>Has anyone got an example that could help us? |
| | Adding new ideas or comments to stimulate talk; using prompts rather than taking over. | Another idea could be …<br>[Ari,] what do you think? |
| Monitor | Drawing students into the discussion. | Who hasn't had a turn?<br>(Cathy,) who's idea do you like so far?<br>Tell us why.<br>Why do you think that? |
| | Challenging students' responses. | Where does that information come from? How do we know it is true? |
| | Gauging when to move on to a new discussion point. | Let's move on to consider … |
| | Providing constructive feedback. | That's an interesting point, and you were able to add to (Stanley's) idea. |
| Mediator | Keeping the group focused. | Let's get back to … |
| | Managing differences. | This issue has brought up some deep feelings and not everyone will think the same. What can we agree on? |
| | Assisting decision making. | We need to make a decision; what are our choices? |

**Figure 1.20 Teacher Roles During Discussion**




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Explore Topics Creatively*

- Offer ideas and opinions, e.g. I agree with … I feel a bit like … .
- Elaborate on others' ideas, e.g. Let's be clear what Lydia is saying here.
- Disagree, challenge, e.g. How do we know that information is true?
- Ask for clarification, e.g. Why do you think that?
- Explain and justify, e.g. Do you see what I'm getting at?

### *Encourage Resolution and Consensus*

- Appealing to rules or authority, e.g. Do you think that decision will be okay with the Principal?
- Persuading, e.g. Let's try Narn's idea first, then try Liam's idea.
- Agree, suggesting compromise, e.g. Okay, so what we have agreed is … .

## Sharing

Use role-plays, games and activities to emphasise the social skills and positive behaviours required for successful discussions, using them to contrast with the effect and consequences of verbal and non-verbal put-downs.

### Encouraging Participation

Teachers will find that some students tend to dominate a discussion while others are reluctant to contribute. One way to encourage participation and turn-taking is by giving each student four or five blocks. Students place the blocks in front of them. Every time they contribute an idea to the discussion, they put a block in the middle; if they run out of blocks, it is time to listen. Any student using no blocks, or only a few blocks, needs encouragement to contribute more to the discussion (Jones 1996). Reluctant speakers may need explicit instruction so that they develop the confidence to assert themselves in a discussion. Jones describes this as 'brave talk': students asserting themselves to communicate when they feel intimidated expressing a view that differs from the group's view.

Jones (1996) suggests students can follow these three steps:

1. Ask themselves if it's the right time to be assertive; have they tried to contribute in the standard way?
2. Use eyes, gesture or touch to make contact with the other students, as well as putting on a brave look.
3. Use a calm, brave voice to deliver their message to the group.

### *Observation*

Observation is a strategy where one group member takes on the role of observer. The observer watches whether the group stays


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013
cc BY NC ND

on-task, and reflects on how things work and the reason why things do not always go to plan. Observation proformas could be used by students in the middle and upper years. Discuss the type of listening that is needed for discussions. Observers will need to listen for information, values and biases, and to think through the group's responses. Figure 1.21 shows a sample Observation grid.

| Group Discussion | Example |
|---|---|
| Everyone was able to contribute. | |
| Praise and encouragement was given. | |
| Ideas were built on. | |
| People disagreed in an agreeable way. | |
| Opinions were justified. | |
| Open questions were asked. | |
| Clarifying questions were asked. | |

**Figure 1.21 Observation Grid**

### *Language Features*

To participate in discussions, speakers need to use conjunctions to disagree and to present an alternative position. Conjunctions are used to relate clauses in terms of sequence, consequence, comparison and addition. *Consequential conjunctions* are used in speech to connect two clauses and show cause and effect, e.g. to this end, then, in conclusion, after all, nevertheless, admittedly, in this way, otherwise, therefore, for, however, yet, thus, so that, in case, if, even if, unless, although. *Comparative conjunctions* are used in speech to pick out contrasts and similarities between clauses, e.g. equally, that is, on the other hand, likewise, in contrast, instead, but, like, as, when, whereas, except that.

## Guiding

Discussions should be explicitly scaffolded so that:

- the conversation involves a real sharing of ideas, with participants providing extended statements and directing their comments, questions and statements to others
- students can redirect and select next speakers
- the talk is about the subject matter and encourages critical reasoning.




© Department of Education WA 2013

The following are examples of questions that can be asked to encourage students to make distinctions, evaluate, apply ideas, form generalisations and raise questions of their own.

### *Making Distinctions*

- How are ... and ... alike?
- How are they different?
- How is this similar to (a previous problem or experience)?
- How is this different to (a previous problem or experience)?

### *Evaluating*

- How could this be improved?
- Do you think it is fair (just, appropriate)? Why?
- How could you justify this?

### *Applying Ideas*

- What might happen if ... ?
- If ... happened, what do you think the result would be?
- What would it be like if ... ?
- What would you do if ... ?

### *Forming Generalisations*

- What is true about all of these?
- What conclusions can you draw now?
- What have you learned about ... ?
- What does this tell you about ... ?

### *Raising Questions*

- What could be the possible causes of ... ?
- What could be the consequences of choosing to ... ?

### *Inferring*

- Can you explain from this how ... happened?
- Can you explain from this why ... happened?
- What might have caused this?
- How do you imagine they are feeling?
- Can anyone think of a different idea? (Gibbons 1992)

## Applying

It is useful for groups to keep a discussion log. The group can use the log to record their progress in problem-solving tasks, and to make brief notes about points raised, plans formulated and decisions made. This information can be used later for small-group reflection; it allows students to monitor and evaluate their own progress, as well as reflect on the specific language they use to interact.


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

# Extended Conversations

## Description

Extended classroom conversations are sustained conversational dialogues that occur between students and teachers and between students and students. They are used to create or negotiate understanding of a topic, as outlined in Figure 1.22.

### Extended Conversations Table

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Heuristic:** 'Tell me why?'<br><br>*Seeking and testing knowledge.* | **Extended Conversations** | **Text Structure**<br>A sustained exchange that extends beyond the IRE (Initiate, Response, Evaluate) routine.<br>**Knowledge Skills and Understandings**<br>• Can respond to questions and statements.<br>• Can identify key information.<br>• Can follow peer discourse in group interactions.<br>• Can identify different points of view.<br>• Can express opinions and substantiate.<br>**Language for Social Interaction**<br>• Manage turn-taking.<br>• Manage topic changes.<br>• Repair communication breakdowns.<br>• Sustain conversations.<br>• Use non-verbal listening and speaking behaviours.<br>• Conversational repair.<br>**Specific Functions of Language**<br>• Give or request information.<br>• Provide background information if required.<br>• Provide appropriate detail.<br>• Negotiate for meaning.<br>• Make distinctions.<br>• Form generalisations.<br>**Language Features**<br>• Use linking words.<br>**Vocabulary**<br>• Technical language.<br>• Specific vocabulary for seeking information.<br>**Metalinguistic Awareness**<br>• Consider the listener's needs<br>• Group processes; how to build on others' ideas, take turns, hold the floor. |

**Figure 1.22**

## Modelling and Sharing

Teachers need to engage students in real conversations about meaningful subjects. They then need to provide opportunities for students to interact with each other about the ideas involved, and for the teacher to interact with the students. The interactions are




© Department of Education WA 2013

reciprocal and promote shared understandings. Teachers constantly encourage these exchanges by providing 'point of need' scaffolding. This is achieved by asking certain kinds of questions, listening carefully to students' responses and using a variety of variety of strategies to extend and clarify their thinking (Hammond 2001).

Teachers can provide classroom scaffolding in the following ways.

- By selecting particular themes and eliciting responses that draw students along a particular line of thinking.
- By asking questions that provide a cue for the response, e.g. A term that starts with 'a'...
- By elaborating and redefining the requirements of an activity.
- Using 'we' to show that the learning experience is being shared (Mercer 1994, cited Hammond 2001).
- Using a follow-up question to reformulate or extend the feedback interaction, e.g. What else do you know about polar bears?

Students' technical vocabulary can be developed by:

- repeating students' remarks
- recasting by acknowledging a student's comment, then modifying it to make it more appropriate (Gibbons, cited Hammond 2001).
- appropriating or transforming a student's information. This operates at a deeper level than recasting, as the teacher takes up the idea behind the student's remark and offers it back in a more technically appropriate way (Newman, Griffin & Cole 1994, cited Hammond 2001).

## Guiding

- Most classroom exchanges follow the Initiate, Response, Evaluate (IRE) or Initiate, Response, Feedback (IRF) patterns. Teachers need to explicitly scaffold conversations so that students engage in sustained exchanges that go beyond the IRE or IRF patterns.
- Guide students to build on others' ideas. Teach them to make explicit reference to previous comments, e.g.
  - That was a good point about ... It could also ... .
  - I would like to add to what Sue said by ... .
  - Yes! And then you could ... .
- Encourage students to summarise and then extend others' contributions. They can use this process to confirm or clarify their ideas, e.g.
  - Am I right in thinking that you mean ... ?
  - Are you saying ... ?
  - Have I got it right? You think ... .




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Teach students how to redirect their comments, questions and statements to others, and how to probe to select the next speaker, e.g.
  – What is it about ... that makes you say ... ?
  – Can you tell us a little more about ... ?
- Also teach them how to seek clarification, e.g.
  – What do you mean when you say ... ? Can you give us an example?
  – Is that the same as ... ?
  – Can you explain a little more about ... ?

Make students aware that all of their contributions promote shared understanding of the subject matter, and that it is the co-construction of knowledge that is important. Emphasise that the exploratory talk stage allows students to develop their knowledge and understanding of technical subject-specific vocabulary; they can then use the vocabulary to communicate publicly.

## Applying

Provide opportunities for students to take part in sustained conversations and exchanges about substantive topics as a whole class and in small groups. Build shared understanding that interactive dialogue is not a scripted task controlled by one person or group.

**Figure 1.23 Every Student's Contribution Promotes Shared Understanding**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Partner and Small-Group Work

## Description

Group work has greater potential for conversational interaction than whole-class activity; it provides an authentic learning context in which students can develop speaking and listening skills. Handing over more control to learners allows them to be actively involved in the construction of their own knowledge. This elevates student achievement (Hall 2001) because it promotes what Barnes terms 'deep knowledge'; knowledge that is internalised and connected to other knowledge (Barnes 1992, cited Hammond 2001). In small-group situations with set tasks, language is an important learning medium. Small-group learning allows the teacher to adopt a more informal role in discussion; this allows the teacher to effectively scaffold students' learning by providing 'instructional conversation', where apprentices and experts converse together. Partner and Small-Group Work text structures and language features are outlined in Figure 1.24.

### Partner and Small-Group Work Table

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Interactional:** 'Me and you'.<br><br>*Getting along with others, establishing relative status.*<br><br>Also: 'Me against you'.<br><br>*Establishing separateness.* | **Partner and Small-Group Work** | **Text Structure**<br>Students can use language to interact and plan, to negotiate roles, develop or maintain a play or group activity, monitor and reflect on the task.<br>**Knowledge Skills and Understandings**<br>• Involve all people in a group<br>• Respond to what others say<br>• Listen to others and create a space for them<br>• Develop and clarify thoughts and ideas<br>• Summarise and evaluate<br>• Manage time<br>• Prioritise<br>**Language for Social Interaction**<br>• Give feedback<br>• Allocate roles<br>• Request help<br>• Tutor<br>• Invite<br>• Reinforce<br>• Ask permission<br>**Language for Learning**<br>• Suggest ideas<br>• Disagree<br>• Reach consensus<br>• Give instructions<br>• Consult<br>• Challenge<br>• Explain<br>• Problem-solve<br>• Comment<br>• Describe<br>• Evaluate<br>• Give and justify opinions<br>• Initiate ideas for thought and action<br>• Build on and extend others' ideas<br>• Initiate discussion<br>• Negotiate<br>• Ask questions<br>• Explain<br>• Share knowledge, persuade<br>**Metalinguistic Awareness**<br>• Share feelings and attitudes<br>• Use anecdotes as comparison with past experience<br>• Offer analogies |

**Figure 1.24**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

## Modelling and Sharing

- Understand what small groups can do, and how you are going to use small groups in the classroom (see suggestions in the *First Steps Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning Book,* Chapters 5 and 8). Reid et al (2002) suggest taking a backwards planning approach to small groups: consider the student learning outcomes first, then reflect on the best processes and strategies to help students achieve these outcomes.
- Plan the composition of the groups. Group size is a personal choice. Reid et al (2002) recommend using small groups of four for everyday classroom interaction. Groups of four are small enough for students to listen, and they encourage all members to contribute. Groups of four are also flexible: they can be split into groups of two, merged in groups of eight, etc.
- Students learn effectively in small groups only by participating in small-group work. So provide lots of opportunities for students to work in pairs or small groups to explore concrete materials, share ideas and create group products.
- Discuss how working in small groups or pairs gives students the opportunity to explore topics thoughtfully. This gives them time to interpret and restate their ideas, enhancing their understandings. Small groups also give students the opportunity to learn from each other, to share ideas and to learn from their mistakes.
- Discuss the purpose of different types of groups and how they operate, e.g. home groups, work groups, sharing groups. **Home groups** are friendship groups chosen with the students; they are a good place to start explaining the basic ideas of group work. Reid et al (2002) recommend having students gather in home groups at the beginning of the day, and also using them for starting an activity. In contrast, **work groups** are formed according to the needs of the learning activity. It is important to emphasise that work groups are focused on work and getting the job done, not about socialising (Reid et al 2002). **Sharing groups** provide students with an audience for their 'draft thinking', and are useful for presenting the outcomes of their work. Reid et al (2002) suggest dissolving sharing groups at different stages of the lesson and the unit of work. They can be planned or impromptu in response to a need.
- Model and share agreed ways of moving in and out of groups, behaving in groups, using time effectively and staying focused on the task.
- Model and discuss acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Teach students how to make 'positive talk': make eye contact, use a calm voice and make positive comments.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Establish the tone of the classroom environment as a 'community of practice'. Make sure that all students know how to work together, how to behave and interact harmoniously, and how to be courteous and honest. Also make sure students have a high standard of work, respect others, encourage curiosity, accept difference and enjoy learning (Reid et al 2002). These concepts are built up over time, modelled by the teacher's behaviours and interactions.
- Use carefully structured questions to help foster students' group skills (Reid et al 2002).
- Discuss the language required to successfully work in small groups. Distinguish between the language for social interaction and language for learning; emphasise that both of these are important for a group to function. (See 'Investigating a Communicative Environment' on page 21 for a list of specific language.)
- When planning group work, identify the language needed for effective group interaction, then identify students' competencies and identify the skills, understanding and values that students will need to work more productively (Oliver et al 2005).

## Guiding

- Provide opportunities for students to develop their social skills in pairs or small groups, e.g. allowing a speaker to finish without interrupting, practising a particular social skill in addition to accomplishing the speaking task, acknowledging others' responses. Support students by demonstrating respect for all persons regardless of race, gender, age or ability.
- Provide opportunities for students to work effectively as group members.
- Help students develop the interpersonal skills needed to work successfully in a group, e.g. making sure everyone is included, making decisions, managing different points of view, responding sensitively and appropriately to other students' viewpoints.
- Help students focus on the task at hand.
- Help students take on different roles within a group and make positive contributions.
- Establish and model procedures to help groups make decisions, e.g. list the alternatives, list the positives and negatives for each alternative, try to include the favourite parts of several ideas, take a vote.
- Encourage students to express and refine their ideas by sharing them with others, using speaking and discussion as a means of learning.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Encourage students to build on others' insights, use speaking guides that focus on main ideas, supporting details, or other criteria.
- Help students broaden their repertoire of speaking strategies and skills. Do this by asking questions that encourage students to explain aspects of the text, e.g.
  – Why does ... ?
  – How do you ... ?
  – Why did this happen?
  – Why do you think that ... ?
  – What caused this?
  – What might this be the result of? Why do you think so?
  – Can you think of another reason or explanation?
  – Can you explain how ... ?
- Ask questions that encourage students to describe aspects of the text, e.g.
  – What is ... like?
  – What can you see?
  – What did you notice about ... ?
  – How would you describe ... ?
  – What are some of the characteristics?
- Provide opportunities for students to speak in a variety of situations. These should include informal speaking situations, e.g. one-on-one conversations; Think, Pair, Share sessions; Talking Circles; small-group discussions. Formal speaking situations should also be included, e.g. introductions, meetings, short talks or presentations, oral readings. Provide scaffolding as required to ensure that students succeed.
- Scaffold and guide students' reflections on assessing their own speaking practices and behaviours. Help students identify their strengths and needs before, during and after speaking. This can be done by involving students in developing appropriate criteria to assess development of speaking practices and behaviours, e.g. How will I know if my audience understands me?

## Using Partners and Small Groups in the Classroom

Choose from the following cooperative learning procedures to give students experience in working in a small group or with a partner.

### *Think, Pair, Share/Square*

Students listen to a presentation, view a video or read a print text. They record their ideas individually using notes, a diagram or a listening (viewing or reading) guide. Then they team up with




© Department of Education WA 2013

a partner to discuss their ideas. Or a pair can team up with two sets of partners to form 'a square'. The pair or square then adds to the ideas that they generated individually. 'Squares' often share the ideas with the whole class (McTighe & Lyman, 1992).

### *Partner Conversations*

Partner Conversations is a variation on Think, Pair, Share/Square. After listening to, reading or viewing the text, students work in pairs to retell the story or its main ideas. Emphasise the guidelines for speaking before students share their stories.

### *Talking Circles*

Students use the Talking Circle format to take turns sharing ideas and information. An object such as a talking stick is passed around the circle. The student who has the object speaks about the topic while other members of the circle listen attentively. When the student has finished speaking (or if they don't want to speak on the topic at that time), they pass the object to the next person. The object continues to move around the circle as ideas and opinions are expressed. Encourage students to listen carefully and to build on each other's responses.

### *Circle within a Circle*

Circle within a Circle is also known as Fishbowl. Students sit in two circles, one circle inside the other. Students in the inner circle discuss what they know and what they have found out about a specific topic. Students in the outer circle make notes and reflect on what they are hearing; they then discuss any new ideas and information and question the inner group about the topic. The two groups swap roles and the new inner circle deals with another topic.

### *Cooperative Learning Groups*

The teacher sets a task and assigns students to groups. The students complete the learning task in groups, then share their results with other groups. Each student has a particular role or task to fulfil. In Jigsaw, students are divided into 'home' groups of five students. They then form new 'expert' groups that include one student from each home group. The new groups research and become experts on a specific aspect of the topic. The expert groups then discuss what they know about the topic, what they have learned, and develop a shared understanding. Expert members then return to their home groups to share their new knowledge.




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

### *Instructional Conversations*

Instructional conversations are discussion-based lessons 'geared towards creating richly textured opportunities for students' conceptual and linguistic development' (Goldenberg 1993). They are designed to produce discussions that are focused and engaging – and not dominated by a series of questions asked by the teacher. Identify and provide the background knowledge students need to make sense of what they will be listening to, reading or viewing. After students have listened to, read or viewed the text, ask an open question that invites students to think, elaborate on their ideas and interact with each other, e.g. Why did Rob make that decision?

### *Literature Conversations*

Goldenberg suggests that teachers employ an explicit instructional model to guide students in conversations (1993). Eeds and Wells (1989) advocate a special way of discussing a story that they call 'grand conversation'. They recommend the following:

- Read a work of literature with (or to) students.
- Remind students of the guidelines for grand conversations:
  - Only one person talks at a time.
  - Listen carefully so you can tell when someone has finished speaking.
  - Take turns speaking.
  - Everyone should share at least one idea.
  - No-one should share more than two ideas until everyone has shared something.
  - Stay on the topic.
- Engage students in a conversation about the work, allowing them to direct the conversation.
- Ask one interpretive or literary question to further students' thinking and responses.

### *Literature Circles*

Students can form small groups or literature circles to read and discuss a text. To facilitate the group process, assign roles to define student responsibilities. These roles will help students to focus their reading and prepare their discussions (Daniels 1994). A group of four, for example, might include the following:

- **A discussion director** who makes sure that each group member has an opportunity to respond to the collection of questions, and who highlights additional key ideas from the text.
- **An illustrator** who visually or graphically represents the key passages that group members discuss.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- **A connector** who makes sure that the story is related to personal experiences.
- **A plot tracer** who notes the events that happen in the section in point form.

Different roles could also be assigned. Daniels advocates using roles so that students learn a variety of ways of responding to a novel. The roles can be abandoned later when students no longer need them; some students will find the roles restrictive, preferring to respond in ways more suited to the text.

### *Think, Pair, Share*

Think, Pair, Share is a cooperative structure. Partners think privately about a question, issue, situation or idea, then discuss their responses with each other (Bennett, Rolheiser & Stevahn 1991). Think, Pair, Share is a relatively simple structure that can be implemented quickly and incorporated into almost any form of instruction.

### *Twos to Fours*

After completing a task with a partner, pairs join another pair to make a group of four. The pairs share what they have learned or created, giving all four students the opportunity to explain or reflect on a learning task.

### *Jigsaw*

Students form groups to research a topic or complete a task, sharing their information. Having to explain or describe their acquired knowledge helps students to gain better understanding of the topic or task. Students need to listen carefully so that they can add new knowledge to their own, and ask questions to clarify or gain further information. Follow these steps:

- Divide the class into 'home' groups of four to six students. Give each student a number within in their group.
- Students can move from home groups into 'expert' groups, based on their numbers, e.g. All the number 3s meet at the computers. Students in the expert group can then complete a specific task, e.g. Read and summarise a piece of text. Find out how to create a graph on the computer.
- When tasks are completed, students return to their home group and share what they have done or found out.

### *Listening Triads*

Students work in groups of three, with students taking the role of speaker, questioner or recorder. The speaker talks on a given topic, e.g. gives an opinion on an issue, explains a procedure or a concept.




© Department of Education WA 2013

The questioner asks probing questions and seeks clarification. The recorder makes notes in preparation for giving feedback; they comment on the effectiveness of the questions asked, the order of information presented, the explanation of technical terms, etc.

### *Critical friends*

One group member is chosen to observe the way the group works together. A simple checklist should be devised in collaboration with students so that all group members are aware of the features that will be observed, e.g. social interaction, the structure of speaking, listeners' responses or behaviours.

## Applying

Provide lots of opportunities for small-group work, as talk and social interaction are central to learning. Talk helps students develop deep knowledge as they start to make important connections. Work with students to help them understand how they learn through oral language so that they can exploit this resource in their group work; analysing group transcripts or video footage and stopping at certain points to reflect on specific incidents helps students to identify how they use language in the learning process. In this way, teacher and students can identify and construct lists of assessment criteria about small-group interaction or about a specific language function (Derewianka 1992).

**Figure 1.25 Social Interaction is Central to Learning**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Oral Reports

## Description

Oral reports give students experience in selecting and organising information that will suit specific purposes, situations and audiences. The demands of the context will also influence vocabulary, pace of delivery and other speaking and listening conventions. Reports can be unplanned or planned.

Rod Maclean (2005) suggests that successful oral reports are those based on genuine communicative needs and a shared focus of interest. Teachers should capitalise on the opportunities presented by normal classroom activities, such as reporting on the outcomes of an inquiry or project, or a group member sharing expertise or a skill (Maclean 2005), rather than presenting contrived activities. An outline of Oral Reports text structures and language features is given in Figure 1.26.

Subjects such as 'Technology and Enterprise' and science provide authentic contexts and purposes for composing oral reports, especially if students have been involved in group work first. Informally reporting back to the whole class gives students a real opportunity to develop common understandings and clarify new learning. It also enables the recycling or review of new language and the development of concepts (Gibbons 2002).

## Familiarising and Analysing

Taped segments from TV or radio reports are a useful way to make students familiar with the range of oral reports, e.g. news, weather, sports, current affairs, travel shows, documentaries. They also provide a useful platform for analysing the specific language structures and features that characterise these oral commentaries. Students need to be able to identify the role of the listener and the requirement for active listening so that they can then identify facts, key words and words that signal opinions.

## Modelling and Sharing

Make sure that all students are familiar with the structure of the report, explanation description and recount. Be explicit about the language features of each text type.




© Department of Education WA 2013

## Oral Reports Table

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Representational:** 'I've got something to tell you.'<br><br>*Communicating information, descriptions, expressing propositions* | **Oral Reports**<br><br>**Can be planned or unplanned** | **Text Structure**<br>Description, explanation, report, recount<br>**Knowledge Skills and Understandings**<br>• Can structure a report so that it contains enough detail for the listener to follow and understand<br>• Clarify new learning<br>• Can actively listen<br>**Specific language skills**<br>• Select and organise information<br>• Identify key facts<br>• Contextualise information<br>• Explain<br>• Compress information<br>**Language Features**<br>• Key words<br>• Words that signal opinion<br>**Patterns of Speech**<br>• Influenced by audience<br>**Vocabulary**<br>• Explicit concepts as directed by topic<br>**Metalinguistic Awareness**<br>• Language use clear and precise<br>• Pace<br>• Understand how props can support communicative efforts |

**Figure 1.26**

# Guiding

## Informal Reporting

- Clearly explain the need for clarity and conciseness before any oral reporting session.
- When students are working in small groups, remind them that the language spoken in face-to-face contexts often uses reference words because we can see what is being talked about, e.g. as this, these, that. We can also can point to items in the immediate environment and others will know what we are talking about. But when students are telling others what they have learnt, the context changes; language use moves from more concrete to more abstract. This puts pressure on the speaker to reconstruct the experience through language; they are now required to make explicit the things or people they are talking about.
- Provide planning time for groups to negotiate what they say before reporting back to their peers.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Establish sharing groups when projects are completed, and have groups make a report or presentation to this sharing group (Reid et al 2002). The emphasis is on presenting group conclusions – rather than personal conclusions – to a smaller audience of listeners who shared a related task. Sharing groups reduce pressure on students and allow them to become familiar with the skill of oral reporting.
- Capitalise on any 'teachable moments' and provide instructional conversation in the form of scaffolding where appropriate. (See 'Procedures for Teaching Speaking and Listening' on page 5.)

### Formal Oral Reporting

- Explicitly teach the process of preparing to speak before asking students to present formally, and make sure you allocate appropriate preparation time. Teach students different forms of organisation, e.g. compare and contrast, making lists, points for and against, problem and solution. Also teach the techniques of formal reporting, e.g. rehearsing using cue cards and visual aids (Rod Maclean 2005).
- Teach students about the non-verbal elements in communication used to modify meaning and convey emotion, e.g. standing in front of an audience creates a distance between the speaker and their audience, and this influences how the presentation will be received. Standing in front of an audience requires students to use correct grammar and speak clearly, avoiding colloquial expressions; it also requires them to be more precise in the content and form of their talk (Rod Maclean 2005).
- Discuss how personal presentation also impacts on meanings conveyed, e.g. choice of clothing, personal appearance, gestures, body language and use of eye contact.
- Discuss the differences between a dialogue and a monologue; a dialogue is interactive, but a monologue is delivered with minimal audience participation.

## Applying

Explicitly teach students the skills of formal presentations. Before expecting them to present a formal report, make them aware of the demands of a formal context and teach them strategies they could use.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Questioning and Inquiry

## Description

Questioning is the basis of effective inquiry and encourages higher-order thinking. Good questioning promotes understanding, as it provides opportunities to explain, clarify, probe, make connections and identify problems and issues. Questioning contributes to dialogue between teachers and students, and influences students' use of questioning to promote their own learning. Self-questioning enables students to assess their own results and efforts, as well as to set goals for improvement. Questioning needs to be nurtured and developed for all ages and for all disciplines. See Figure 1.27 for an outline of Questioning and Inquiry text structure and language features.

### Questioning Table

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Heuristic:** 'Tell me why?'<br><br>*Seeking and testing knowledge.* | **Questioning and Inquiry** | **Text Structure**<br>Is able to ask and answer open and closed questions to serve a range of purposes<br>**Language for Social Interaction**<br>• Can used closed questions as a strategy to elicit specific information<br>• Can used open questions to elicit a range of responses<br>**Specific Language Skills**<br>• Ask speculative questions<br>• Shape questions to produce optimal information<br>• List the type of questions that will elicit information<br>• Stimulates and extends own thinking by questioning to explore possibilities, and make links<br>• Uses a range of literal, inferential and evaluative questions<br>**Language Features**<br>• Sentences are grammatically well formed and appropriate to the situation<br>**Patterns of Speech**<br>• Paraphrasing<br>• Open-ended question technique, e.g. Can you tell me more … ?<br>**Metalinguistic Awareness**<br>• Can use a range of literal, inferential and evaluative question formats to suit informal and formal situations<br>• Can self-question |

**Figure 1.27**

## Modelling and Sharing

Students learn best in a supportive classroom environment where their contributions are valued. Students' self-esteem and classroom participation are affected by the kinds of questions that are asked, the way they are asked and the responses that are given. It is




© Department of Education WA 2013

important that teachers provide learning experiences that enable students to develop questioning and problem-solving strategies, and that allow students to develop complex thinking. To teach questioning effectively, teachers need to understand the elements of a good question, recognise different types of questions, design questions that incorporate complex thinking, and understand the importance of reflective and metacognitive thinking types of questions (Painter 1996).

It is important initially to model and teach students what a question is, how to ask a question and what its function is.

### What Is a Question?

Questions have a particular identifying structure that is easily seen when they are written. Questions often begin with who, what, which, why, when, where or how, e.g. What is the capital of Western Australia? How would you train a seal? Why? Sometimes questions begin with a verb or part of a verb, e.g. Do you know how to ride a bike? Can you tell me the time? May I have some more dessert? Questions always end with a question mark.

Model and teach students how to listen to and identify questions. Encourage them to construct questions, then ask them to listen carefully so that they can identify how the voice rises at the end of the question. Discuss the difference in tone. Questions can be as short as one word and do not need to be proper sentences. Discuss how we can ask non-verbal questions, e.g. using our body to ask a question by raising an eyebrow.

There are many reasons why we ask questions. The kind of question we use depends on its purpose, e.g. we want something, we want to know, or because we do not understand.

## A Range of Questions

Questions have been classified in numerous ways by different authors. As teachers, it is important to understand the range of question types and the different demands these make on the students. Some of these classifications are discussed below. The most common question types are ordinary, inquiry, complex, open, closed, rhetorical, divergent and Socratic.

Splitter and Sharp (1995) have five categories for questions:

- Open
- Closed
- Ordinary




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Inquiry
- Rhetorical

**Open-ended questions** These are questions that invite an actual explanation for a response. Questions that begin with '*how*', '*what*' and '*why*' are typical, e.g. How about … ? What would happen if … ?

**Probing Questions** These are open-ended questions with follow-up questions to probe further to elaborate or clarify ambiguity, e.g. Can you explain exactly why … ?

**Speculative Questions** These are open-ended questions that encourage speculation, e.g. Do you think it means … ?

**Closed Questions** Closed questions generally result in short 'yes' or 'no' responses or one-word answers. They should be used only when you want precise, quick answers. Otherwise, they inhibit thought.

**Ordinary Questions** These are the questions we ask in situations where we want something we do not have, e.g. information, directions or food. We ask someone who we think will be able to provide what we are seeking.

**Inquiry Questions** These are questions asked when the questioner does not assume that the person questioned knows the answer. Responses do not usually signal closure, but are likely to stimulate further inquiry. The process of inquiry often begins with examination of the question. This is part of the problem-solving process.

**Rhetorical Questions** These are not real questions because the questioner usually knows the answer. Teachers often use these questions to discover what students know about particular topics, but these questions do not foster inquiry nor do they involve students in their own educational endeavours.

The majority of questions we ask in the classroom require only a simple 'yes' or 'no' answer or a brief response. These are classified as **closed** or **skinny** questions. These are questions that can be answered without requiring complex thought to reach the answer. They are used to recall information, assess prior knowledge and assess knowledge gained. However, it is actually the environment in which the questions are considered that produces the closure, not the question or the answer. If the environment encourages the formation of questions as an important activity in its own right,




© Department of Education WA 2013

and if it encourages students to use a variety of strategies regarding questions and activities as a step to further inquiry, then even closed questions may be open (Painter 1996).

## Socratic Questions

Richard Paul emphasises the importance of what he calls Socratic questions. These are questions which probe the underlying logic or structure of our thinking and enable us to make reasonable judgements. He discusses six types of questions:

**Questions of clarification**
What do you mean by that?
Can you give me an example?

**Questions that probe assumptions**
What is being assumed?
Why would somebody say that?

**Questions that probe reason and evidence**
What are your reasons for saying that?
What criteria do you base that argument on?

**Questions that probe implications and consequences**
What might be the consequences of behaving like that?
Do you think you might be jumping to conclusions?

**Questions about viewpoints or perspectives**
What would be another way of saying that?
How do Maria's ideas differ from Peter's?

**Questions about the question**
How is that question going to help us?
Can you think of any other questions that might be useful?

As seen in the examples above, Socratic questions are open questions; used appropriately, Socratic questions can stimulate inquiry and exploration.

Questions that involve complex thinking require explanation and detail in their answers, and probably need to allow time for thinking and reflection. These questions are often called **open** or **fat** questions. They are often used to build up information, to allow for more personal responses and to generate further discussion and questioning.

Questions that do not require any definite answers are often used as introductory questions at the beginning of an inquiry session.




© Department of Education WA 2013

Their purpose is to engage students in the content that is to follow, guiding students' thinking in specific directions.

Open-ended or divergent questions promote open-mindedness and invite many answers or possibilities. They can stimulate the exploration of concepts and ideas, and facilitate creative and critical thinking processes. Emphasis is on the individual. These are the kinds of questions that challenge students and their thinking. Open questions are generally contestable in that they leave us with more to think about and may not bring complete satisfaction (Painter 1996).

## Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) provides teachers with a useful framework to evaluate the level of thinking required for different learning tasks. The level of thinking progresses from the simple recall or recognition of facts to increasingly more complex and abstract levels that require making decisions. Bloom's Taxonomy suggests the following levels of thinking.

**Knowledge:** factual recall responding to questions such as Who? What? When? Where? How many … ? Describe?

**Comprehension:** demonstrating understanding of an underlying process or concept, e.g. Can you tell me? Can you show me how?

**Application:** relating current knowledge to prior knowledge or future experience, e.g. What does this remind you of? What would happen if … ? What other reasons might there be?

**Analysis:** probing beyond the surface information, e.g. What is the function of … ? Why did … ? What purpose was there in … ? What can you conclude from … ? What evidence is there?

**Synthesis:** bringing together information and using it to explore new ideas, e.g. What ways might there be to … ? Pretend that … . Develop a story based on … . If you were Tanya, what would you have done?

**Evaluation:** weighing up information and giving judgement, e.g. Should … ? Do you agree or disagree? Why? Why not? Justify your position. Do you think that … should … ?

Dennis Palmer Wolf (1987) suggests that there is an even greater range of challenging questions than indicated in Bloom's Taxonomy.




© Department of Education WA 2013

Wolf includes the following:

**Inference Questions:** questions that ask students to go beyond the immediately available information (Bruner 1957). To push beyond the factual in this way is to ask students to find clues, examine them, and discuss what inferences are justified.

**Interpretative Questions:** questions that propose students understand the consequences of information or ideas.

**Transfer Questions:** questions that provoke a breadth of thinking, asking students to take their knowledge to new places.

**Questions about Hypotheses:** questions that can be predicted and tested. Effective teachers probe for predictions as a way of making students actively aware of their expectations, e.g. when we listen to a speaker, we gather evidence about the content of the subject, the trustworthiness of the orator, the style of the speaker, all of which we use to predict what we can expect them to say next. Predictive thinking is important in all learning areas.

**Reflective Questions:** questions that demand students ask themselves questions such as 'How do I know that I know?' 'What does this leave me not knowing?' 'What things do I assume rather than examine?'

## Guiding

There are a range of approaches that can be used to improve students' thinking and improve their ability to answer different types of questions.

- Build and sustain a community of inquiry in the classroom by providing guided practice activities in formulating questions, asking questions and responding to questions.
- Display lists in the classroom that show the different question types and some example sentence stems, e.g. A text-implicit question needs to be answered using partial information from the text.
- Teach students that questioning is a valuable part of the teaching–learning process, as it enables teachers and students to establish what is already known, and allows them to use and extend this knowledge and to ultimately develop new ideas.
- Teach students that questioning provides a structure for examining ideas and information.
- Give students 'wait time'; allow them five to ten seconds of thinking time, followed by time in pairs to rehearse answers and ideas before returning to whole-class responses.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Highlight, praise and analyse good questions and answers. Be explicit about their qualities. Ask students what they thought of their answers.
- Encourage relevance, clarity and consistency, reasoning and use of evidence. Ask follow-up questions.

## Questioning Tools

There are a number of programs and strategies that can be used in the classroom. Information on all of these is readily available, and the most useful have been outlined below.

### *Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking*

Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking is a thinking classification organised by level of complexity. The taxonomy involves all categories of questions (Painter 1996). See page 71 for more detail about Bloom's Taxonomy.

### *Thinkers' Keys*

Thinkers' Keys is a strategy used to develop creative and critical thinking. It was designed by Tony Ryan, a consultant for Gifted and Talented Programs in Queensland. Each of the twenty keys is a different question that challenges the reader to compose their own questions and come up with responses (Painter 1996).

### *Question Matrix*

The Question Matrix was designed by Chuck Weiderhold in 1991. It contains 36 question starters that ask what, where, when, which, who, why and how. These questions are asked in present, past and future tenses and range from simple recall through to questions that require predictions and imaginative responses. Proceeding through the matrix, the questions become more complex and open-ended. The questions range from use of memory to creative and critical questioning.

The Question Matrix is a visual tool for helping students to create their own questions about topics, to encourage in-depth thinking, and to allow students to design their own learning tasks. The Question Matrix can be made into cubes, cards, spinners or divided into strips or single questions, depending on the task. It provides opportunities for greater choice and flexibility, and makes it easier for students to follow up individual interests.

The levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking can be linked to the Question Matrix. Questions along the top of the grid are knowledge




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

questions. Questions along the bottom of the grid require analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

### *Divergent Thinking Model*

Good thinkers and problem solvers have devised questions that they can ask themselves during the teaching and learning process. Metacognition involves recognising specific strategies such as self-talk and self-questioning that are used to connect thinking, plan processes and reflect on outcomes. Self-questioning models and techniques promote complex thinking; they direct students to reflect on and assess their questions, responses and actions, and to identify areas for further investigation (Painter 1996).

Wilson and Wing Jan give examples of the types of questions that promote divergent thinking (Wilson and Wing Jan 1993).

### *Six Thinking Hats*

Edward De Bono devised the Six Thinking Hats strategy to encourage students to look at a topic, problem or idea from more than one perspective. Each hat represents a different kind of thinking and involves asking different kinds of questions. This process is clearly explained in De Bono's books and other readily available commercial material.

### *A Questioning Toolkit*

Jamie Mackenzie devised the Questioning Toolkit, which contains several dozen kinds of questions. Mackenzie believes that if students have a system of classifying questions, or a typology, then they are better equipped to select the appropriate type of question when selecting from their toolbox. Mackenzie suggests that the toolkit should be introduced as early as kindergarten so that students can arrive in high school with powerful questioning technologies and techniques. Further information can be found on the *www.fno.org/nov97/toolkit.html* website.

### *Socratic Circles*

From the 4th century BC, Socrates cultivated critical thinking through thoughtful questioning. Socrates was adept at posing questions that challenged his learners' statements. Socratic questions stimulate interaction between the teacher and learner, challenging the learner to defend his or her cognitive position, e.g. You believe one should always be truthful. What if telling a falsehood would save another person's life? Is truth nobler than life? Matt Copeland uses Socratic circles in his English class to develop




© Department of Education WA 2013

higher-level talk thinking, and to foster creativity, critical thinking and new ways of looking at the world. Socratic questions are a useful strategy for all learning areas (Copeland 2005).

### *Inductive Questioning*

Inductive reasoning is arranging information according to inherent classes or principles. Hilda Taba suggested that inductive reasoning forms the fundamental building blocks of higher thinking. Give students numerous pieces of information and ask them to organise it in a meaningful way; they should be able to infer the organisation and significance of the information they are handling. Competent students know how to organise and value information (Taba 1966). Ask questions related to the relative importance of the information, e.g. What is most important? What is least important? Should you bother learning this? Why? (http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au)

### *Deductive Questioning*

Deductive reasoning involves inferring details from generalisations or from the 'big picture'. Ausubel's research on deductive reasoning led him to suggest that teachers should introduce a topic on a general basis then slowly focus on details, linking new information with known information (Ausubel 1968). Ausubel recommended presenting something already known as 'an advanced organiser' under which students could 'file' new information; present the new material in context; and ask questions that involve comparing new and old information, e.g. If this is true about A, B, and C, what might we conclude about D? Knowing the cause(s) in these cases, what would you guess about the cause(s) in this case? (http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au)

## Applying

As teachers, we need to understand the elements of good questioning, recognise different types of questions and design questions that incorporate complex thinking. Encourage students to ask questions about their learning experiences. Provide reflection time during and after lessons to give students time to formulate, ask and discuss questions. Involve students in planning and negotiating learning situations. Encourage students to develop their own questions for planning and self-assessment. Demonstrate to students how questioning helps to extend thinking skills, clarify understandings, gain feedback on teaching and learning, provide revision strategies, create links between ideas, enhance curiosity and provide challenges.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Interviews

## Description

Interviews provide an authentic context for questioning. In an interview, students practise effective questioning and develop the skills to listen critically. Figure 1.28 identifies the text structures and language features of interviews.

### Interviews Table

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Heuristic:** 'Tell me why?'<br><br>*Seeking and testing knowledge.* | **Questioning and Inquiry**<br><br>**Interviews** | **Text Structure**<br>**Planning for the interview**<br>**Introduce:** Self and purpose<br>**Conducting Interview**<br>**End Interview:** Prepare a signal question or phrase that signals the interview is coming to an end.<br>**Thank** the person for their time and effort, and inform them about what you intend to do with the information. Confirm permission to use the information in the agreed manner.<br>**Knowledge Skills and Understandings**<br>• Clarifying own and others' opinions<br>• Acknowledging another person's idea, building on another person's idea<br>• Frame questions to suit situation and person<br>**Language for Social Interaction**<br>• Manage turn-taking<br>• Manage topic changes<br>• Repair communication breakdown<br>• Sustain conversations<br>• Use non-verbal listening and speaking behaviours<br>• Conversational repair<br>**Specific Language Skills**<br>• Ask open questions<br>• Ask questions to gain information<br>• Paraphrase<br>• Ask impromptu questions<br>**Patterns of Speech**<br>• Use of informal speech patterns when talking to family or a friend<br>• Courtesies, e.g.<br>– Thanks for your time and effort<br>– Have I got that right?<br>**Vocabulary**<br>• Understand technical or specialised vocabulary required<br>**Language Features**<br>• Logical connectors<br>• Use of grammatical structures, if formal<br>**Metalinguistic Awareness**<br>• Understand expected behaviours of interviewers<br>• Use of stress, pausing and repetition to enhance meaning |

**Figure 1.28**




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

Through practising interviews, students learn that successful interviewers:

- clarify the information they want to elicit and plan questions to achieve that outcome
- ask relevant questions
- listen to and access information before formulating follow-up questions
- rephrase questions to clarify misinterpretations
- build on previous questions to gain information or additional information.

Students' interviewing skills develop when they are provided with situations where questioning and critical listening are related to a specific purpose. The most effective way of promoting a meaningful context is through interviews linked with the curriculum.

## Familiarising and Analysing

Taped segments from TV or radio reports are a useful way to make students familiar with the range of oral reports, e.g. news, sports, current affairs, talk shows, documentaries. They also provide a useful platform for analysing the specific language structures and features that characterise these oral commentaries. Students need to be able to identify the role of the listener and the requirement for active listening so that they can then identify and discuss the techniques of the interviewees and find concrete examples of asking relevant questions; formulating follow-up questions; rephrasing questions to clarify misinterpretations; and building on previous questions to gain additional information.

## Modelling and Sharing

- Teach students the purpose of interviews.
- Review the range of taped TV and radio interviews that students have experienced. List the different types of interviews, stating their purpose, target audience and context. Discuss similarities and differences between the various interviews. Reflect on the role of the interviewer:
  - Did they ask questions in a particular order to steer the interview in a certain direction?
  - Did they attempt to manipulate emotions?
  - Was the interviewer biased?

Find and discuss any concrete examples of bias or manipulation.

- Reflect and explore the question 'What makes a good interview?'
- Make sure students have a thorough understanding of the range and type of questions that can be asked during an interview.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Guiding

Establish a genuine purpose for conducting an interview, such as:

- finding out about a student's achievements for the school newspaper
- gathering information on a class topic, e.g. interviewing parents about their jobs, interviewing a local wildlife carer about first aid for injured animals
- collecting data for a research project, e.g. attitudes to buying domestic rather than imported products
- collecting oral histories, e.g. describing the lives of older citizens in the community.

## Knowledge, Skills and Understandings

### *Planning the Interview*

Teach students:

- to understand that interviews need to be carefully planned to gain maximum benefit
- to prepare questions before the interview and write them down. (This is a good way to explore topics in detail and clarify the type of information needed.)
- to construct questions that address a range of issues relevant to the topic
- to know that questionnaires are a written form of an interview
- to formulate questions that require more than 'Yes' or 'No' responses.

### *Conducting the Interview*

Teach students:

- to know that their questions don't have to be discussed in a predetermined order
- to understand that the interviewer often generates additional questions that encourage the person being interviewed to elaborate on their earlier responses
- to avoid adding their own opinion or judgements in case they restrict responses, e.g. What did you think of that awful (wonderful, interesting) film?
- to steer the interview towards the information you want
- to recognise when unplanned questions will help them gain further information, while knowing they have their own set of planned questions to ask
- to keep the interview on the topic and address the issue when it deviates, e.g. wait for an opportunity to jump in and say 'Can we get back to what you were saying about ... ?'


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

### *Active listening*

Active listening plays an essential role in the interview process. Students need to learn how to:

- listen carefully to avoid repeating the same question
- use information given in answers to generate follow-up questions
- respond to the interviewer who only gives 'Yes' or 'No' answers
- avoid using technical language that the audience won't understand, e.g. Am I right in saying that metalinguistics means ....
- reinforce speaking and listening courtesies during the interview session
- use their prepared questions to help guide the interview rather than stay as an inflexible list
- cope when some of their questions are covered by the interviewee in an anecdote or as part of another question
- keep track of their own understanding by summarising information, e.g.
  - Have I got this right, you said ... ?
  - Am I right in thinking that you ... ?
  - What did you mean by ... ?
  - How did you react to ... ?
  - Can you give me an example of ... ?
- to keep track of the interviewee's understanding and interrupt if they misunderstand a question, e.g. Oh, I'm sorry, I really meant ... .

### *Metalinguistics*

Metalinguistics is the ability to think and talk about language; it includes being aware of and knowing the behaviours that can be expected when conducting an interview. Students need to learn the following:

- To listen quietly and resist the urge to interrupt.
- To use positive body language and facial expressions to show that they are interested and that they value what the person is saying.
- To listen patiently, knowing that some people need more thinking time than others, e.g. Give the person plenty of time to think about the question.
- To accept that silences will be part of the interview, and resist jumping in and suggesting words or phrases.
- To understand that it is important to record the interviewee's words, not their own.
- To listen carefully and concentrate on what the person is saying.
- To keep the interview on the topic and address the issue if it deviates, e.g. Wait for an opportunity to say 'Can we get back to what you were saying about ... ?'




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Language Features*

Students need to learn how to:

- ask open questions, using sentences such as:
  - Tell me about ... ?
  - What do you remember about ... ?
  - How did you feel about ... ?
  - Can you tell me more about ... ?
- review the vocabulary that might be required, and make sure they understand any technical or specialised terms
- use appropriate speech patterns and grammar structures for the situation, e.g. using informal speech patterns when talking to family or friends; using correct grammatical structures in formal situations.

### *Ending the Interview*

Teach students how to:

- prepare questions or phrases that will signal that the interview is coming to an end, e.g.
  - Just one last question before we finish ...
  - Looking back, what would you say was most important ... ?
  - What is the most important message that you would like others to know about ... ?
- close the interview by thanking the interviewee, e.g. 'Thanks for sharing your time today. We really appreciate the opportunity to have a more in-depth discussion about ... .
- inform the interviewee how the information provided will be used. Students should confirm that they have permission to use the information in an agreed manner.

**Figure 1.29 Interviews Need to Be Carefully Planned**




© Department of Education WA 2013

## Applying

An interview is usually conducted one-to-one, with the interviewer asking questions to elicit information. The technique can be adapted in classrooms to involve the whole class in interviewing one person. This approach allows students to work collaboratively to plan questions, practise the interview format and evaluate the effectiveness of their performance.

Provide students with opportunities to practise the interview session with people they know before inviting guests to the school.

Before students take part in formal interviews, set up an interview situation that allows them to practise their interview routine and identify the strengths and weaknesses in their techniques. This practice review should then be evaluated in the following terms:

- Were the questions worded to avoid 'Yes' and 'No' answers?
- Did the questions lead the interview towards the required information?
- Were questions rephrased to clarify information?
- Were the previous questions elaborated to gain more information?
- Did the answers provide ideas for follow-up questions?

As a result of the role-play and review, encourage students to modify and refine their questions as needed (Robertson 1997).




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Meetings

## Description

Meetings provide an authentic context in which to develop and reinforce speaking and listening skills. They provide a forum to discuss matters of importance, problems and to resolve specific issues. Meetings are generally planned, and students have the opportunity to plan in advance what they are going to say; however, much of the talk will be unplanned discussion or exploratory talk. Meeting text structures and language features are outlined in Figure 1.30.

### Meetings Table

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Representational:** 'I've got something to tell you'.<br><br>*Communicating information, descriptions, expressing propositions.* | **Meetings** | **Text Structure**<br>Students will engage appropriately when negotiating and acting in set roles, discussing problems, expressing opinions, reaching consensus and making plans of action<br>**Knowledge Skills and Understandings**<br>• Following meeting protocols according to the type of meeting<br>• Developing and clarifying thoughts and ideas<br>• Offering and justifying personal opinions<br>• Contextualising information<br>• Explaining<br>• Identifying key information<br>• Acknowledging differing points of view<br>**Language of Social Interaction**<br>• Managing turn-taking<br>• Sustaining conversations<br>• Using appropriate non-verbal listening and speaking behaviours<br>**Language for Learning**<br>• Giving an opinion<br>• Disagreeing in an appropriate way<br>• Reaching consensus<br>• Explaining<br>• Problem-solving<br>• Giving and justifying opinions<br>• Building on and extending others' ideas<br>• Negotiating<br>• Asking questions<br>• Consulting<br>• Challenging<br>• Commenting<br>**Specific Language Use**<br>• Using language appropriate to the meeting context<br>**Patterns of Speech:**<br>• Influenced by the context of, and purpose for, the meeting.<br>• Able to adjust their speech and select appropriate vocabulary to suit their purpose, e.g. persuade, request, facilitate or explain<br>**Metalinguistic Awareness**<br>• Able to think aloud, reformulate their position and revise points of view based on others' contributions<br>**Vocabulary**<br>• Vocabulary used will depend on the context and purpose of the meeting |

**Figure 1.30**




© Department of Education WA 2013

## Familiarising and Analysing

Allow students to become familiar with meeting structure and format by showing them taped segments of actual meetings, or by allowing them to observe a meeting in real life. Analyse the language structures and features that characterise these meetings. Also discuss and analyse the role of the listener, particularly the need for active listening so that students can identify facts, key words and words that signal opinions.

## Modelling and Sharing

- Introduce the purpose of the meeting.
- Model and discuss the different roles that need to be assumed in facilitating a meeting, e.g. chairperson, timekeeper, recorder.
- Model and discuss the text structure of a meeting.
- Model and discuss the specific technical words that are a feature of some formal meetings, e.g.
  - **apologies** excuses sent prior to a meeting by people who know they cannot attend. Apologies are recorded in the minutes.
  - **chairperson** the person who runs the meeting.
  - **correspondence** all mail received and sent by the group holding the meeting.
  - **general business** discussion of anything not covered in the minutes.
  - **motion** a statement from an individual as to what he or she believes should happen.
  - **mover** a person who moves a motion (or person with the idea).
  - **reports** statements by the office bearers of the organisation, prepared for the meeting.
  - **seconder** a person who supports someone else's motion (every motion must have a seconder).
  - **secretary** person who records the minutes.
  - **treasurer** person who looks after the financial concerns of the group.

### *Procedure*

Model and discuss:

- how to join in a meeting
- how to take turns
- what to contribute
- how to call for contributions, e.g. brainstorming, making lists, giving reasons for and against
- how to analyse options and make decisions
- time limits for individual contributions
- responsibilities of speakers and listeners during a class meeting.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Listening Skills Required*

Model and discuss the following:

- How to identify words that signal the content. This allows students to think through possible responses.
- How to listen carefully to others' ideas. This allows students to judge whether they agree or disagree, so they can add their own ideas or suggest alternatives.

Use a class meeting to model and discuss appropriate body language and facial expressions.

## Guiding and Applying

Meetings are characterised by debates on the various motions raised by the individuals attending the meeting. Use meetings to give students opportunities to make decisions on issues such as class rules, class behaviour, punishments and class trips.

**Figure 1.31**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Arguments and Informal Debates

## Description

The language used for debates and developing arguments is designed to persuade an audience to accept a particular point of view. Involving students in debates gives them practice in giving and justifying opinions. Students will also need to research topics and gather accurate and relevant information to support a particular point of view. Debates can be used for exploring issues and different points of view that arise from literature being studied in class, ethical issues surrounding science or social studies topics, or local concerns and current affairs. Debate text structures and language features are outlined in Figure 1.32.

**Argument and Informal Debate Table**

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Representational:** 'I've got something to tell you'.<br><br>*Communicating information, descriptions, expressing propositions.* | **Arguments and informal debates** | **Text structure**<br>Argument, persuasion, debate<br>**Knowledge, Skills and Understandings**<br>• Expressing and justifying opinions<br>• Point of view<br>• Contrasting points of view<br>• Refuting an argument<br>• How to address arguments impersonally (by disagreeing with the statement, not the person)<br>**Language Structures and Features**<br>• Technical vocabulary<br>• Organising information, i.e. introduction, supporting evidence, drawing conclusions<br>• Persuasive linguistic devices<br>• Persuasive tone of voice and body language<br>• Use of technical data<br>• Use of neutral language to present an argument |

**Figure 1.32**

## Modelling and Sharing

The level of formality of a debate and the planning for it depend on the purpose, intended audience and situation at the time. When introducing debates and arguments, have students explore ideas with a partner or exchange points of view in small groups. Students in the early phases might simply express their likes and dislikes, with teachers helping them to give a supporting reason, e.g. the teacher might ask 'What vegetables will we plant in our new garden?' The student might say 'I like ... because ...' or 'I don't like ... because ...'.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Using Current Issues*

Teachers can utilise current issues or problems encountered through literature or social science lessons as the basis for a debate, e.g.

- The school has purchased new playground equipment, but only junior students are allowed to use it.
- The fox did the right thing in eating the Gingerbread Man.
- There needs to be a Safety House in every street.

| The fox did the right thing in eating the Gingerbread Man | |
|---|---|
| **Yes, because ...** | **No, because ...** |
| Gingerbread is made to be eaten. | The Gingerbread Man did not belong to the fox. |
| The Gingerbread Man was silly to trust the fox. | The fox was dishonest and tricked the gingerbread man. |
| Foxes are wild animals so it is expected that they will eat any food they find. | Gingerbread is not healthy food for foxes. |

**Figure 1.33 A Yes/No Table**

### *Brainstorming*

A brainstorming technique can be used to get the whole class to contribute ideas for and against a topic. In this way, students begin to understand how to form and justify opinions. These ideas could be recorded on a class chart.

### *Take a Stand*

Create an imaginary line in the classroom. Allocate one end of the line to those students who agree with a specific statement; allocate the other end of the line to those who disagree with the statement. Students can stand anywhere along the line, according to their opinion on the issue. When students have decided on their position, they should talk to others near them to exchange their reasons for taking such a stand. These reasons could then be shared with the rest of the class.

**Figure 1.34 Deciding on Positions During 'Take a Stand'**




© Department of Education WA 2013

The next step is to have students discuss how people arrive at an opinion. Involve students in discussing some of these guiding questions:

- Would you change your mind after hearing what other people say?
- What helps you make up your mind, e.g. hearing new information, understanding how an issue impacts on others?
- What words do people use when they are explaining their opinion, e.g. do they use emotive words?
- What can you tell about a person's beliefs from the tone in their voice?

***Four Corners***

Introduce an idea or issue and ask students to decide on a position. Allocate the four corners of the room as follows:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree.

Students will move to one of the corners. Ask them to discuss their views with others who have chosen the same position and share their reasons. It is important that students are able to justify their opinions at this stage. Record on a chart some of the reasons that students give to justify their opinions; use the chart as a prompt for students who need support in expressing their opinions.

# Guiding and Applying

## Developing an Argument

Take an idea such as 'Supermarkets should only stock products made in Australia'. Some groups should develop arguments that agree with the statement; other groups should develop arguments that disagree with it. Students will need time to research the topic. This could include reading reference books, asking their parents what they know, or searching the Internet for information from lobby groups.




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

When groups have developed their arguments, they can meet with an opposing group to take turns in discussing the topic. Students could prepare notes to assist their discussion, such as those listed in Figure 1.35.

| Supermarkets should only stock products made in Australia | |
|---|---|
| **Argument** | **Supporting ideas** |
| It helps farmers | If farmers make money, they spend money in the community and that helps other businesses. People can keep living in rural areas. |
| Food safety | In Australia, we have strict rules about using chemicals. How do we know that other countries do the same? |
| Fair pay | In Australia, we know that people get paid fair wages for the work they do. How do we know that people in other countries get fair pay? We wouldn't want people to be treated unfairly. |

**Figure 1.35 Developing an Argument**

Make sure that students have plenty of experience in planned discussions of this type before attempting any formal debating.

## Introducing Formal Debates

Introduce formal debates after students have had many experiences with developing opinions, justifying opinions and developing arguments. Involve students in researching situations where arguments or debates are entered into, e.g. television or radio interviews, political debates, documentaries. Students will need to analyse these examples, examining how they are structured and what language features are used. Ask students to look for the following:

- How the information was ordered.
- How the participants took turns.
- What the main arguments were.
- How the arguments were supported.
- How the arguments were refuted.
- What examples of neutral language were used.
- What devices were used.
- How arguments were summarised.




© Department of Education WA 2013

## Conducting a Formal Debate

One example of conducting a formal debate is outlined below.
A formal debate involves:

- a topic
- an affirmative team of three speakers
- a negative team of three speakers
- a chairperson who coordinates the debate
- a timekeeper who keeps track of time limits
- an adjudicator who evaluates both individual and team performances. The adjudicator decides who will be the winning team.

## Formal Debate Procedure

1 The chairperson opens the debate by welcoming the audience, stating the topic and introducing the speakers for each team. The chairperson then outlines the procedure for the debate. Each speaker will be given a time limit, usually three to five minutes. A timekeeper may give a warning bell thirty seconds before the time limit and another bell to signal the end of the time limit.
2 The first affirmative speaker gives the team's definition of the topic, outlines their case and presents two or three arguments, supported with evidence.
3 The first negative speaker should negate the affirmative team's topic definition, and present a definition for the negative team. This speaker then outlines the case for the negative.
4 The second affirmative speaker presents the main part of the team's case and redefines the topic from the affirmative point of view.
5 The second negative speaker presents the main arguments for the team and redefines the topic.
6 The third affirmative speaker summarises the case for the negative and attacks and rebuts the case for the affirmative.
7 The third negative speaker summarises the case for the negative and attacks and rebuts the case for the affirmative.
8 If appropriate, the chairperson calls for questions from the audience. This gives the adjudicator time to collate results.
9 The adjudicator makes an assessment of the two teams, commenting on each team member and allocating points; they then announce the winning team.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Interest Talks

## Description

Interest talks are a way for students to share topics of personal interest with others. Choosing a topic they know well allows students to concentrate on developing the skills needed to organise and present the information to others. The main aim of an interest talk is to make a topic sound interesting to others.

Interest talks contain information that is used to describe, e.g. a student talking about racing cars will need to describe different types of racing cars, such as stock cars. Interest talks also contain explanations, e.g. how stock car races work. Interest talks can be part of daily sharing sessions with a partner or small group, or they can be developed into a planned, formal presentation. The text structure and language features of Interest Talks are outlined in Figure 1.36.

### Interest Talks Table

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Personal:** 'Here I come'.<br><br>*Expressing individuality, awareness of self, pride.* | **Interest Talks** | **Text structure**<br>• Explanation<br>• Description<br>**Knowledge, Skills and Understandings**<br>• Initiates ideas<br>• Draws on background knowledge and experiences<br>• Considers the needs of the audience<br>**Language Structures and Features**<br>• Subject-specific or technical language<br>• Descriptive words, e.g. adverbs, verbs<br>• Sequence information or include steps in an explanation<br>• Giving and justifying opinion<br>• Use of visual aids, e.g.<br>– models<br>– pictures<br>– flow-charts<br>– PowerPoint displays<br>– diagrams |

**Figure 1.36**

## Specialised Vocabulary

Interest talks contain vocabulary that relates to a specific topic. They may contain technical words or terms that need to be explained to the audience. Interest talks will also make use of signal words to compare, show cause and effect or to indicate an order.




© Department of Education WA 2013

## Modelling and Sharing

Begin by brainstorming a list of topics and activities that students are interested in. This could include sports, hobbies or reading preferences. Generate another list showing why these topics might be interesting, e.g. students might be interested in improving their skills in a particular area, working towards a goal or making a collection.

Students in the early phases will need help to generate the words and phrases they need to explain their interest. Older students will need to consider ways to make their talk appeal to an audience that might not share their interest.

Use interest talks from TV programs as models. Select a segment that showcases a person discussing a particular interest; direct students' attention to the vocabulary used and the way explanations or descriptions are structured. Ask students to reflect on guiding questions such as these:

- Did the person sound interesting?
- Am I inspired to find out more?
- Did I care about their topic?
- Did the talk make me think about the topic in another way?

Select from the modelling and sharing suggestions listed in Figure 1.37 to suit the needs of your students.

| Teach Speakers to: | Examples |
|---|---|
| Introduce a topic | I would like to tell you about …<br>I first became interested in …<br>This is the medal I won for … |
| State reasons for an interest in the topic | I find … interesting because …<br>I like challenging myself to …<br>It is a creative pastime that …<br>I enjoy the feeling of … |
| Select information that is suited to the audience | Decide on how much background information and detail to include, e.g. What do you know about the audience? What would they already know?<br>Judge how much you can say in the time allocated. |
| Explain any technical terms to the audience | This is called the … and it is for …<br>We use the word … to describe … |
| Make appropriate eye contact | Make eye contact with your partner from time to time. When speaking to a larger group, make eye contact with some members of the audience as you speak. |
| Use a tone of voice, pacing and pauses to engage the audience | Speak slowly when describing and explaining. Pause after introducing new information. Sound excited when describing exciting things. |




© Department of Education WA 2013

| Teach Speakers to: | Examples |
|---|---|
| Use visual aids to engage the interest of the audience | Show the audience models, pictures or examples of your interest. Be careful not to hide your face. Don't let the visual aids become a distraction. |
| Conclude the talk | And last of all ...<br>The final thing is ...<br>I would like to remind you ... |

**Figure 1.37 Sequencing an Interest Talk**

**Figure 1.38 Listeners Show Attentive Listening Through Body Language**

| Teach Listeners to: | Examples |
|---|---|
| Show attentive listening through body language | Face the speaker and make some eye contact<br>Encourage the speaker by nodding and smiling, laughing in appropriate places, etc.<br>Listen for key words and main ideas |
| Formulate questions to probe for extra information, or to clarify information | What has been your best time?<br>What is your favourite event?<br>What are you hoping to achieve next?<br>How did you get the most points? |
| Decide when it is appropriate to ask a question | Discuss times when is it helpful to interrupt, and when it is better to wait until the speaker has finished |
| Show appreciation when speaking and listening with a partner or in a group | I liked the bit about ...<br>You should tell ... They would like to hear<br>Applause |

**Figure 1.39 Teaching Listeners**


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

## Guiding and Applying

Students with similar interests can join together in pairs to discuss topics of interest. They could work together to generate ways of organising an interest talk, and even present a talk together.

### *Specialised Vocabulary*

Have students list all the words that relate to their special interest. They should choose words that would need to be explained to an audience and words that would interest the listeners.

### *Visual Aids*

Have students discuss the visual aids they could use to make their talk more interesting for listeners, and how they would be used, e.g. a student talking about their interest in soccer might use a trophy or a poster of their favourite player.

### *Rehearsing*

Provide time for students to plan and rehearse if the talk is going to be presented to a group. Students will need to record their ideas in a sequence using memory aids, e.g. drawings, pictures, flow charts, diagrams or PowerPoint. They will need to practise with their chosen aid before presenting their talk to a larger group.

**Figure 1.40 Using Visual Aids Can Bring a Story to Life**

### *Random Topics*

Random topics can be introduced as a means of encouraging impromptu talks once students are familiar with the structure of an interest talk. Prepare a model, toy or picture for younger students and ask them to create an interest talk with a partner. Older students could be given something abstract and asked to give a short interest talk based on the object, e.g. an antique tool with an unknown purpose. The aim is to convince the audience that the speaker has a genuine interest in the object.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Storytelling and Anecdotes

## Description

Telling stories, retelling events and relating personal anecdotes has traditionally been the way that cultures and societies have preserved and celebrated their traditions, passed on their values and belief systems, and entertained and instructed.

We communicate by telling stories; they allow us pass on information and to make meaning of our lives. We tell stories about our experiences, e.g. the car accident on the way home, our day at work or school, the television show we watched. We use a combination of language functions within these personal narratives, e.g. we recount, describe or report as we tell our stories.

Narratives need to be an important feature in all classrooms. Narratives help students to connect what is happening in the classroom with the real world; they provide a way of understanding, organising and communicating experiences (Ewing and Simmons 2004).

Telling stories is a vital part of everyday conversation, and should not be confused with formal performance speaking. However, there may be occasions when teachers extend storytelling skills into performance speaking. The text structures and language features of Storytelling and Anecdotes are outlined in Figure 1.41.

### Storytelling and Anecdotes

| Language Function | Text Type | Text Structure and Language Features |
|---|---|---|
| **Imaginative**<br><br>*Creating new worlds, making up stories and poems.* | **Retelling and telling stories and anecdotes**<br>**Drama** | **Text Structure**<br>Narrative, recount, description, report, retelling<br>**Knowledge, Skills and Understandings**<br>• When to include an anecdote or story in conversation<br>• How to include others in composing the anecdote or story<br>• What to listen for, e.g. who the characters are, what the problem might be<br>• How to visualise when listening<br>**Language Structures and Features**<br>• Language to entertain and inform<br>• Language to express experiences and emotions<br>• Include an orientation, series of events, a complication and a conclusion<br>• Descriptive vocabulary<br>• Variety in tone of voice, volume, etc.<br>• Expressive body language<br>• Use of rhetorical questions<br>• Use of intensifiers (really, very, quite) to build significance and create drama |

**Figure 1.41**


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

## Modelling and Sharing

Teachers can introduce storytelling by drawing attention to the stories and anecdotes that students share in school, both in the classroom and in the schoolyard. Teachers can often share experiences with students by saying 'I have a story to tell you about that,' or 'That reminds me of the time Sabina told us that story about ...'.

In this way, teachers model informal storytelling. Mallan says that, 'Many teachers subconsciously use stories in their teaching ... The story may be intended to discipline, to explain, to praise, to warn, to set an example, to reassure ...' (Mallan 1991).

Many teachers draw connections from their personal experiences when they wish to illustrate a point or make their thinking visible; being aware of this type of storytelling allows you to encourage the same skills in students.

Every student benefits from opportunities to share personal stories, recounts or anecdotes. To support students in their ability to tell stories and share anecdotes, it is important to value the stories students bring to the classroom. Many students come from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, and the stories they bring to class may not always fit the traditional 'Western' story pattern, e.g. indigenous Australians tell stories in a cyclical pattern, rather than a linear structure. Support students in collecting suitable family stories to share with the class; parents and grandparents are valuable sources and many students will discover a rich social and cultural history through shared stories.

Developing competency in oral narratives is not about following formulaic or prescriptive structures or expecting students to be able to tell a story according to a prescribed framework. By its very nature, oral narrative is fluid and responsive; it is dependent on context, audience and purpose for its structure. Teachers can introduce the structures and features of storytelling through collaborative activities in some of the following ways.

### *Creating Character Profiles*

Introduce a variety of materials to help students generate ideas about characters, e.g. masks, costumes, hats, shoes, pictures. Students could work in pairs or small groups to invent a character, then describe their character, e.g. their age, where they live, what sort of family they have, what kind of job they do, what hobbies they have.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Circle Stories*

Circle stories involve creating a progressive, cumulative story by following a storyline and making a logical addition to the previous speaker's contribution. The teacher usually starts a story by describing a setting and introducing a character. A student sitting next to the teacher will add to the story before passing it on to the next person, and so on. Creating a story in this way demands active listening and a knowledge of narrative structure.

### *That's Good; That's Bad*

This simple group storytelling game is useful for engaging shy or reluctant speakers. Students sit in a circle. The teacher will model the process by starting the story with a fortunate event that is then followed by an unfortunate event. The group of students respond with 'That's good' or 'That's bad'. The next turn will be taken by a student, and so on. For example:

Teacher: *When I was doing the washing, I found $20 in the laundry basket.*
All: *That's good.*
Student: *So I went to put the money in my wallet and I told my Dad. Dad said, Oh good, that was the money to pay the paper bill.*
All: *That's bad.*

The circle story continues, alternating good and bad events (adapted from Mallan 1991).

## Guiding and Applying

Teachers can promote the enjoyment of informal storytelling by providing a guiding statement that helps students generate ideas and structure their speaking. Students can tell stories in pairs or small groups. Some students may wish to share their story with the whole class. Choose from some of the following ideas:

- Tell 'Remember when' stories from when you were little.
- Retell 'Remember when' stories that you heard from grandparents about life when they were little.
- Tell 'heroic' stories from occasions when you saved the day, e.g. kicked the winning goal, saved your little brother from a disaster, found the lost keys.
- Tell 'catastrophic' stories, e.g. how you got a scar, when the car got a flat tyre, when you missed the bus.
- Tell stories about pets, missing pets, crazy pets and mysterious pets.
- Tell spooky stories about camping holidays or strange shadows late at night.


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

## Sharing Community Stories

Invite guest storytellers to visit the classroom. Guests could be invited for a range of purposes, e.g. investigating change in the community over time, investigating the traditional stories of indigenous community members, celebrating Book Week or Literacy Week.

Discuss the visits of guest storytellers; use the discussion to compile lists of hints that will help students tell their own stories:

- Story beginnings and endings.
- Use of visual aids.
- Use of gestures, facial expressions and movements.
- Words to indicate change of scene or to introduce a new idea or character.
- Words to help the storyteller pause and think of the next part.
- The use of repetitive words and phrases.
- Ways to surprise the listener by adding a 'twist' to the tale.
- Use of variety in the storyteller's voice.

**Figure 1.42 Using Visual Aids to Tell a Story**

### *Remembering Stories*

Teachers can use these ideas to support students in remembering stories they have heard or read:

- Choose a story that has a repetitive pattern, e.g. a traditional story such as 'The hairy toe'.
- Decide where to change your voice in the story, e.g. where to whisper, shout or sing.
- Draw a story map or diagram and have it in front of you.
- Display pictures to help you sequence the story.
- Use puppets or props to help you tell the story.
- Rehearse your story in front of family or friends.
- Record your story, then listen to it and make adjustments.



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

# Speaking and Listening to Entertain

Provide opportunities for students to practise the language to entertain through activities such as Readers' Theatre, puppetry, choral speaking and drama.

### *Readers' Theatre*

Readers' Theatre involves groups of students reading aloud to an audience. The aim is to make a book 'come alive' as students experiment with the use of voice and combinations of voice. Hill says that students 'engage with the text as they make decisions about what stress or emphasis a particular word should have when it is read aloud' (Hill 1991).

Readers' Theatre involves these simple steps:

1 Choose a suitable text.
2 Decide who will become the characters and who will become the narrator.
3 Decide which sections could be read as a group.
4 Decide where sound effects could be used.
5 Rehearse several times.
6 Present the text to another group or the whole class.

### *Reflection*

It is useful to record Readers' Theatre performances so that students can review their performance for qualities such as:

- appropriate volume
- use of pacing
- use of pausing
- use of tone
- use of gesture, facial expression and posture.

### *Puppetry*

Puppets are a useful way of encouraging students to speak and listen; they are often very motivating for reluctant speakers. Puppets are useful as aids when students are retelling familiar stories, as they allow students to practise the structures and features of narrative, and experiment with voice and volume. Students need to work cooperatively as they develop dialogue and rehearse in order to tell a story or anecdote; this process promotes negotiating and problem-solving skills. Puppets can also be used in dramatic performances, or as an effective addition to Readers' Theatre.




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

**Figure 1.43 Puppets Are a Useful Way of Encouraging Students to Speak**

### *Choral Speaking*

Choral speaking is speaking done in unison by a group of people. The aim of choral speaking is to use voice to create mood and enhance meaning when reciting poetry or collectively speaking lines in a scripted play. Teachers will need to discuss language features such as tempo, rhythm, pitch, stress and pausing with students. Students should listen to several models of choral speaking in order to understand these language features.

There are several forms of choral speaking:
**Unison** — The group speaks as one. Participants must listen carefully to each other as they strive to speak clearly with similar pace, pauses, tone and stress on specific words.
**Refrain** — One speaker creates a narrative and the group responds with a refrain.
**Antiphonal** — This uses small groups of students with contrasting voices for different parts of a poem or story.
**Cumulative** — This involves adding voice as the poem or story develops, achieving a building effect that culminates at the end of a poem or at a particular point in a story.

### *Drama*

Drama activities and games provide opportunities for students to use language to entertain. Teachers may organise drama through improvisations or through the use of scripts. The aim is for students to explore the use of language for creative effect. There are many resources available for teachers to access on the subject of drama.




© Department of Education WA 2013

CHAPTER 2

# Contextual Understanding

## Overview

This chapter focuses on how the interpretation, choice of language and the shaping of a text vary according to the context in which it is created and the context in which it will be used.

When speakers and listeners compose and comprehend spoken texts, a range of factors influence their choice of language and the way they shape the text. These factors, which are important for students to understand, include:

- the purpose of the communication
- the subject matter
- the roles of those communicating, and the relationships between them
- the situation surrounding the communication, e.g. the physical setting and the formality of the occasion
- the socio-cultural beliefs and values of those participating in the communication.

This chapter has one section:

- **Section 1 — Developing Contextual Understanding for Speaking and Listening**

**Figure 2.1 Context Will Determine the Language Used**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

SECTION 1

# Developing Contextual Understanding for Speaking and Listening

In order to develop communicative competence, students need to understand the way speaking and listening can be adjusted to meet the demands of a variety of contexts. They also need to be aware of the ways in which spoken language can be manipulated for different purposes. Students learn that the purpose, audience and situation affects the decisions and choices that they make. This is known as the *situational context*. Students also need to know that socio-cultural beliefs, values and assumptions affect those participating in a communication. This is known as the *socio-cultural context*.

Students need to understand that what they say and how they say it will be interpreted and evaluated by others. It is important that students understand the ways in which context affects the message they are trying to communicate.

Students intuitively gain some understanding of situational and socio-cultural context by imitation, observation and repetition. However, it is important not to leave this to chance. Students need to be provided with opportunities to reflect on language use and how it varies according to purpose, audience, situation and subject matter.

## Situational Context

The decisions that students make about their speaking and listening will vary according to the context. These decisions are influenced by the following:

- The situation or setting in which the speaking and listening takes place, e.g. who speaks at assembly, when to speak and when not to speak at the movies, when to speak and when not to speak when there are visitors at home.
- The purpose of the speaking and listening, e.g. thanking someone, asking someone for help, discussing a book or delivering a lecture.
- The roles and relationships between speakers and listeners, e.g. family and friends, teacher, principal, shop assistant, doctor, police officer.




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

- The physical setting of the communication, e.g. home, classroom, sporting event, public library, restaurant.
- The mode of the communication, e.g. face-to-face with one person or several people, telephone conversation or inquiry, radio or using a microphone with a large audience.
- The topic being discussed.

Awareness of these factors will impact on the choices a speaker or listener makes.

# Socio-cultural Context

There are many socio-cultural factors that influence the composition and comprehension of spoken texts:

- The way that people use spoken language reflects and shapes their view of the world.
- Speakers and listeners are strongly influenced by their gender, ethnicity and status.
- Spoken language is used to establish relationships and group identity.
- There are many different varieties of English around the world, including varieties of Standard English. Each variety reflects and shapes socio-cultural attitudes and assumptions.
- Spoken texts can be crafted and manipulated to influence others. This is often done to maintain or challenge existing power relationships between groups such as governing bodies and citizens, business and consumers, employers and employees.

# What Students Need to Know

For students to speak and listen effectively for various purposes and audiences, they need to be aware of the following:

- Speakers and listeners make critical decisions when composing and comprehending spoken texts.
- Speakers adjust their speech as they identify with different groups.
- Speakers' and listeners' consideration of different points of view can confirm, broaden or challenge an existing view.
- The social and cultural background of language users will influence their speaking and listening choices.
- Speakers consciously select and use linguistic devices to enhance impact, or to influence particular audiences.
- Spoken texts can be investigated and analysed to reveal their values and assumptions.




© Department of Education WA 2013

## 1 Speakers and Listeners Make Critical Decisions When Composing and Comprehending Spoken Texts

Students need to learn how to vary the language they use according to the context they are in; this is known as *changing register*. Register is made up of three components:

**Field** — Who or what is being talked about (also known as the topic).
**Tenor** — The relationship between speaker and listener.
**Mode** — How the spoken text is being delivered, e.g. a face-to-face conversation, a telephone conversation, a formal presentation.

Students need to develop a repertoire of skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes in order to choose a register to meet the demands of different contexts. Teachers can help students build these understandings by having them reflect on the different types of communicative contexts that they are involved with every day, as outlined in Figure 2.2.

**Decisions Made by Speakers and Listeners When Composing and Comprehending Text**

**Questions about Purpose**
- What do I want to say?
- Who am I talking to? e.g. One person or many? Known or unknown person?
- Why am I saying it? Who will be interested?
- How can I find out what my audience already knows?

**Questions about the Audience**
- What is the best way to get my message across?
- How will I organise my ideas?
- How much detail do I need to give?
- What vocabulary or phrases will I need?
- What type of language will the audience expect to hear, e.g. Standard Australian English or the language I use at home?

**Questions about the Situation**
- Will I be speaking (or listening) indoors or outdoors?
- Will I be speaking face-to-face with people? On the phone? Using a microphone?
- Is the situation formal or informal?
- When is speaking (or listening) expected?
- What type of listening is required?

**Figure 2.2**

## 2 Speakers Adjust Their Speech as They Identify with Different Groups

Over time, students come into contact with a variety of groups outside their immediate family who use specialised words and ways of speaking. They might interact with a wide range of people who are outside the school context, e.g. doctors, healthworkers, sporting and other community groups.




© Department of Education WA 2013

Oliver et al (2005) describe how people form *speech communities* and *speech networks*. When people speak to the same groups of people frequently, they form speech communities. Students experience this at school when they form friendship groups or join a club or sports team. Certain speech patterns form between the speakers that make them feel like a group. They will have a lot in common, and won't always need to explain the things they talk about because they already share a lot of information, e.g. events that happen at school, at training or in the family.

Students belong to more than one speech community; they will often change the way they speak and what they talk about when they move from one speech community to another. When people move from one group to another they create links between their speech communities and form *speech networks*. In this way, students develop a speech repertoire that will vary for different speech communities. Oliver et al illustrate this in an example from the Tackling Talk website (2005): Students might choose a particular way of speaking when they are with friends, a different repertoire when talking to family members, and another when talking to teachers.

Students need to develop speaking and listening repertoires that enable them to interact in different social, academic and community settings with confidence. Students can learn about adjusting spoken language by analysing the different speech communities they belong to and the different speech networks they have formed. This will highlight the skills they already control and reveal the skills that need to be developed. In this way students become researchers of language.

### *Students as Researchers of Language*

Students need opportunities to discuss how their knowledge, experiences and perspectives influence their speaking and listening choices. They need time to share and discuss their experiences of speaking in home and community settings in order to make links with classroom learning. The types of investigation chosen will depend on students' age and experience. Students in the early phases will need to look at the differences between speaking at home (including the way speaking and listening is adjusted for visitors or older relatives) and speaking at school (including how speaking and listening is adjusted for the playground, the classroom and visitors). Older students can be involved in analysing a greater range of speaking and listening contexts, including making




© Department of Education WA 2013

comparisons, examining a speech from a family gathering, and investigating community-based speaking.

### Making Comparisons

Students could be involved in comparing speaking and listening in order to investigate the way that different registers are chosen. In this way, students *deconstruct* spoken texts, developing awareness of the structures and features that make up the texts as well as awareness of the socio-cultural implications of making such choices.

Students could compare TV programs for very young children to those for older children, then list the differences, e.g. vocabulary, topics, tone of voice. Or students could compare the way that introductions are made, e.g. at home, at a school assembly, on a TV or radio interview.

### Examining a Speech from a Family Gathering

Family gatherings are easily accessible for students, e.g. birthday parties, anniversary parties, engagement parties. Being able to examine how speaking and listening adjustments are made in familiar contexts will support students when they begin to investigate speech adjustments in less familiar contexts. The example in Figure 2.4 is based on a family gathering; it uses Hymes's SPEAKING mnemonic as a tool for analysing a speaking and listening interaction (Hymes 1974).

**Figure 2.3 Investigating Authentic Language at a Family Gathering**




© Department of Education WA 2013

| Setting | Speech Act |
|---|---|
| **Setting the scene**<br>This refers to the speech situation, i.e. the time, place and general physical circumstance. The situation is embedded in a cultural context. | The spoken interaction takes place in the living room of the grandparents' house.<br>The family is celebrating the grandparents' anniversary. At times, the family would be festive and playful; at other times serious and reflective. |
| **Participants**<br>Speaker and audience. Distinctions can be made within these categories, for example the audience can be distinguished as speakers or listeners. | An aunt tells a story, mainly addressing younger female relations, but not excluding other interested listeners. |
| **Ends**<br>Purposes of speech events. | The aunt tells a story about the grandmother to entertain the audience, teach the young women and honour the grandmother. |
| **Act Sequence**<br>Form and order of the interaction that make up the speech acts. | The aunt's story might begin as a response to a toast to the grandmother. The story's plot and development would have a sequence structured by the aunt. Other family members may add, respond or overlap to assist the telling. |
| **Key**<br>Cues that establish the tone, manner or spirit of the speech acts. | The aunt might imitate the grandmother's voice and gestures in a playful way, or she might address the group in a serious voice emphasising the sincerity and respect of the praise the story expresses. |
| **Instrumentalities**<br>Forms and styles of speech. | The aunt might speak in a casual register with many dialect features, or might use a more formal register and careful grammatical 'standard' forms. |
| **Norms**<br>Use of conventions. | In a playful story by the aunt, the norms might allow many audience interruptions and collaboration, or possibly those interruptions might be limited to participation by older females. A serious, formal story by the aunt might call for attention to her and no interruptions as norms. |
| **Genre**<br>The kind of speech act or event; the kind of story. | The aunt might tell an anecdote about the grandmother for entertainment, or as means of instruction regarding valued types of behaviour. |

(Adapted from Dell Hymes' SPEAKING Mnemonic, Appalachian State University)

**Figure 2.4 An Example of a Speaking Mnemonic**

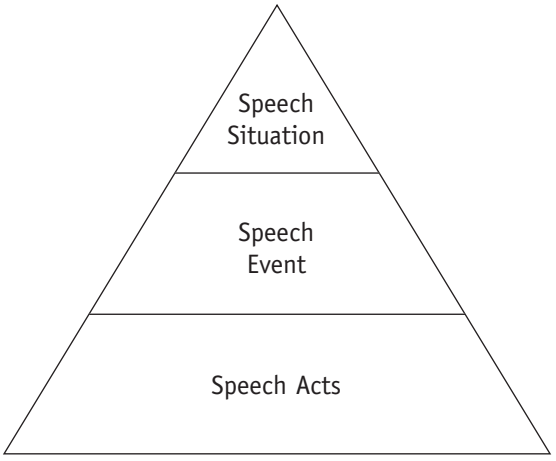



**Figure 2.5 A Speech Pyramid**

## Investigating Community-based Speaking and Listening

Investigating speaking and listening in the community involves examining where and how speaking and listening are used. Hymes devised a task called a 'nested hierarchy' that directs students' attention to situations where talk can be categorised for examination (Hymes 1974, cited in Oliver et al 2003). This activity is also known as a 'speech pyramid' and can be used by students to gather data prior to a discussion. Examples of speech



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

pyramids are used in the 'Consolidating Phase' chapter of the *Speaking and Listening Map of Development*.

Students may investigate a **speech situation** such as a basketball game, then describe the **speech events** contained within it, e.g. the coach's talk before the game, the instructions before and during the game, encouragement from spectators, dialogue between players. The individual utterances that occur within a speech event are **speech acts**, e.g. encouraging remarks, instructions between players. An investigation might focus on one or more of the following guiding questions:

- What functions of language were addressed in the event? (e.g. to inform, entertain or persuade)
- What conventions were needed? (e.g. words and phrases)
- What behaviours were expected? (e.g. What type of listening was required? What responses were expected?)

Investigations could be based on the following community settings:

- A cultural activity, e.g. a church service, a meeting within a community group.
- A sporting event, e.g. as a player, as a spectator.
- Communicating as a consumer, e.g. hairdresser, computer shop, fast food outlet, clothing store, post office.
- At a local government department, e.g. registering a dog, speaking to a shire ranger.
- Community services, e.g. surf patrol, emergency services, doctor, dentist, police officer.

Investigations could also be based on academic situations. Older students might investigate a classroom lesson, lecture or tutorial as a speech situation. They could examine the speech events and speech acts, then examine their own role in using the speech acts to construct meaning. The information collected would then form the basis for follow-up discussions. These discussions could cover the following:

- Any issues or concerns students had with specific speech acts, e.g. a noisy situation, not having access to the right words at the right time, not understanding which register or style of speaking to choose.
- Types of speaking that were effective or that they admired, e.g. conventions that were used well.
- Any difficulties they had with listening, e.g. noise, a boring speaker, unsure of appropriate ways to respond.
- Types of speaking (or listening) that were not well controlled and may need further practice. Students would need to nominate how they could learn needed skills, e.g. through role-play; observing other speakers and listeners.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### When Do You Find Speaking Difficult?

When I'm talking to a person that I don't know well or when I'm talking to someone I don't like or I don't have anything in common with.
(Amelia, 14)

When something is expected of me, when I feel threatened, when I'm in an unknown situation, fear of the unknown or when I'm not really listening.
(Jacob, 17)

Hans: When I'm thinking.
Teacher: So what do you do?
Hans: I slow down. I say things like 'I'm not sure I'm making sense'. I say things again, but try to rephrase. Sometimes I ask a question. Sometimes I say 'I'll have to think about it', so I don't have to give an answer straight way.
(Hans, adult)

**Figure 2.6**

### When Do You Find Listening Difficult?

When I'm not really interested in what they are saying.
(Amelia, 14)

When I'm tired. When the speaker is not respectful to me. When there are distractions.
When I do not agree with the speaker.
(Jacob, 17)

When I'm tired or when I'm trying to concentrate on something else. I sometimes acknowledge what is being said, but I'm not really comprehending.
(Hans, adult)

**Figure 2.7**

**Figure 2.8 Brainstorming Difficulties Through Speaking and Listening**

## 3 Speakers' and Listeners' Consideration of Different Points of View Can Confirm, Broaden or Challenge An Existing View

Speakers use language to represent their points of view. Listeners can either accept or challenge the attitudes, values and beliefs that they hear. Students need to be aware of the way a point of view develops. Some questions to discuss:

- How is a point of view informed? e.g. Is it based on information from TV news or current affairs reports, newspapers, magazines, websites? Is it based on conversations with peers, teachers, parents or other family members?
- What is the difference between fact and opinion?
- How accurate is the information? How do you know it is accurate?




© Department of Education WA 2013

Discussions around the above questions will uncover the processes involved in forming points of view. This will help when students begin to analyse spoken texts:

- Spoken texts can be interpreted from different points of view.
- The speaker's personal beliefs, values and experiences influence what they say.
- There are gaps and silences in spoken texts. Listeners interpret these gaps differently based on their own socio-cultural context.
- Speakers may assume that listeners share their values and cultural knowledge.
- The values of a dominant group or culture are often represented as the norm.

### *Interpreting Spoken Texts*

Spoken texts can be interpreted from different points of view. What is said will be shaped and interpreted in light of a person's attitudes, interests and experiences. For example, a winning athlete might recount an event using language full of positive descriptions. An athlete who suffered an injury during the event will give a different recount. A listener who is also an athlete will listen differently from a person who has no interest in sports.

Students could explore point of view by looking at things people might disagree on, such as the following:

- Grandparents' views on how leisure time should be used, e.g. Is age a factor in point of view?
- Opinion regarding a movie, e.g. Do girls and boys have different points of view? Is gender a factor in formulating a point of view?
- A current controversy in the news, e.g. Is social status a factor in point of view?

## 4 The Social and Cultural Background of Language Users Will Influence Their Speaking and Listening Choices

A person's social and cultural background influences the choices they make when speaking and listening. Elements such as ethnicity, gender, age, education and social class all contribute to the way that we use and interpret spoken texts. Depending on the speaking and listening context, these elements can place people in a position of status and power, or cause them to be significantly disadvantaged, e.g. an indigenous student may not be aware of the conventions of Standard Australian English conversation within a school context; their reluctance to make eye contact, or to contribute answers to some types of questions, may lead to them being considered not competent as a language user.




© Department of Education WA 2013

It is important to provide opportunities within a class for students to be positioned as competent users of language, and to have them recognise how language can be used to manipulate and control (Janks 1993).

Students could explore the influence of beliefs by listening to others express a point of view, using recordings taken from TV or radio. Students should listen to determine the underlying beliefs a speaker has that influence what they think and say.

### *Interpreting Gaps and Silences*

There are gaps and silences in spoken texts. Listeners interpret these gaps differently based on their own socio-cultural context. Spoken texts designed to persuade tend to highlight particular information and ignore other points. Hilary Janks (1993) says, 'Every choice foregrounds what was selected and hides, silences or backgrounds what was not selected. Awareness of this prepares the way to ask critical questions.' Students could examine this by investigating advertising or other persuasive texts and recording their findings on a T-chart similar to Figure 2.9.

| What Have We Been Told? | What Have We Not Been Told? |
|---|---|
| | |

**Figure 2.9 T-chart**

### *Assuming Shared Knowledge*

Speakers might assume that listeners share their cultural knowledge and values. Teachers should involve students in collecting stories about situations where shared cultural knowledge and values were assumed but which resulted in a misunderstanding. Students could be asked to reflect on the implications of making such assumptions. Discussions around some of the following questions might help:

- How will I know if the listener has knowledge or experience of this situation?
- What will make this person feel confident and comfortable in a new situation?
- What explanations will I need to give?
- What questions will I need to ask?




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Dominant Values*

The values of a dominant group or culture are often represented as the norm. Many of the structures in society are taken for granted and can seem normal and acceptable unless they are questioned. Patterns in our society are reinforced by the way that financial institutions, businesses, government structures, media and social services operate. These patterns may serve the needs of some but may act to disadvantage others.

Students can explore this idea by examining local issues, e.g. a section of the community unhappy with a decision made by local government. An issue may directly impact on students, creating an opportunity to explore possible solutions. Such opportunities provide valuable learning experiences, as students:

- research how current decisions were arrived at
- discover the people involved in the decision-making process, and identify those who have been left out
- plan data-gathering processes such as interviews and surveys
- make decisions on possible courses of action
- decide who else might be interested in their findings
- decide how information can be shared.

## 5 Speakers Consciously Select and Use Linguistic Devices to Enhance Impact, or to Influence Particular Audiences

There are many linguistic devices that speakers can use to enhance the message they are trying to communicate. Listeners interpret these devices and decide how they will respond to the message. Encourage students to experiment with the use of linguistic devices; have them examine how others use the devices and reflect upon their effects. It is important that students develop awareness of the power of language to persuade, entertain and inspire, as well as its power to isolate, denigrate or marginalise people. The main linguistic devices used in planned and unplanned speaking are listed below.

### *Allusion*

An allusion is an indirect reference to something outside the immediate context of a speech act. It relies on the listener being familiar with the meaning hidden behind the words. The speaker might make a reference to an event or character from literature, history or something related to current events, e.g. When he finally came home, he was treated like the prodigal son.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Analogy*

An analogy compares one thing with another. Analogies can provide insights into similarities that would otherwise not be apparent, e.g. comparing the difference between Aboriginal English and Standard Australian English to the difference between a social gathering and a formal dinner. The analogy demonstrates the contextualised nature of linguistic and behavioural choices, while giving value to both informal and formal registers. In this way, the explicit teaching of socially valued literacies can be critiqued.

### *Anecdote*

A brief spoken text narrating an interesting or amusing personal incident. The purpose of an anecdote is to reveal a truth or make a point, not just to evoke laughter.

### *Bribery*

Bribery is a persuasive device commonly used in advertising, where special offers are used to encourage the listener to buy a product.

### *Cant*

Using jargon inappropriately to create confusion, e.g. teenagers using words that are obscure to the general population as a means of excluding others.

### *Choice of language*

A speaker can choose to use descriptive, emotive or technical language.

Descriptive: It's an incredibly beautiful place. The garden is cool and green and tranquil.

Emotive: I was devastated when I heard the news and thought for a moment that it couldn't be possible.

Technical: You start with the raw sound from the interviews, voice-overs and ambient sound that you have recorded.

### *Code Switching*

A speaker alternating between one or more languages or dialects; it tends to be a feature of bilingual speakers.

### *Connotation*

Connotation suggests meaning beyond a word's literal meaning. The suggestion can create positive or negative influences, e.g. a TV advertisement showing rugby players, with a voice-over about 'a beefy pie for a beefy Australian'.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Continuatives*

These allow the speaker to signal that they are pressing on with the text; they are used in conversation to signal that the speaker intends to continue speaking, e.g. now, of course, well anyway, surely.

### *Emphasis*

Emphasis is anything that is said with greater stress.

### *Figurative Language*

Figurative language refers to using words in a non-literal way. The understanding of figurative language is often determined by a shared social context. Figurative language is used by speakers to express difficult ideas more clearly, by comparing them to something that the listener is already familiar with. Devices used figuratively include the following:

- **A euphemism** involves using a mild, indirect or vague expression instead of a harsh or upsetting one, e.g. 'He passed away' instead of 'He died'.
- **Hyperbole** is an exaggerated statement, e.g. I've told you a million times not to do that. Hyperbole understatement is the opposite, e.g. I'm a little annoyed with you at the moment.
- **An idiom** is a phrase with a meaning that has been established by common usage, but is not evident from the actual words, e.g. It's as easy as pie.
- **Imagery** is often used to paint a picture for a listener, to evoke a feeling or to describe an object.
- **A metaphor** is an implied comparison between two things that are unlike, without using the words like or as. Rather than describing one thing as being like another, that thing becomes the other. Words that indicate the metaphor are is and are, e.g. Lucy is a ray of sunshine.
- **Metonymy** is substituting the name of something with the name of an attribute or object associated with it, e.g. The pen is mightier than the sword.
- **Personification** is giving human qualities to animals, inanimate objects and abstract ideas, e.g. The car coughed and spluttered before it died.
- **Proverbs** are concise sayings that express a general truth, e.g. It's no use crying over spilt milk.
- **Rhetorical questions** are questions that are asked for effect without expecting an answer, e.g. Are you crazy?




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Flattery*

Flattery involves an appeal to the listener's self-image, including their need to belong or their need for prestige.

### *Intonation*

Intonation is the variation of pitch when speaking. Many languages use pitch syntactically to convey surprise and irony, or to change a statement into a question. *Rising intonation* means that the pitch of the voice increases over time; *falling intonation* means that the pitch decreases with time. A dipping intonation falls and then rises, whereas a peaking intonation rises and then falls. The classic example of intonation is the question–statement distinction, when rising intonation is used for echo or declarative questions, e.g. He found it on the street? and a falling intonation used for wh-questions and statements, e.g. Where did he find it? He found it on the street. Questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no' often have a rising end, but not always, e.g. Did he find it on the street?

### *Irony, wit and humour*

Irony, wit and humour rely heavily on shared socio-cultural context to achieve the author's purpose. **Irony** contrasts the reality and the expectation with what is said and what is meant, e.g. 'A good day for ducks' usually means that it is pouring with rain and is not a particularly good day for people. **Wit** refers to the perception and expression of a relationship between seemingly incompatible or different things in a cleverly amusing way. **Humour** is the perception, enjoyment or expression of something that is amusing, comical, incongruous or absurd.

### *Irrelevance*

Irrelevance is including points or arguments that do not contribute to the main idea, with the aim of distracting the audience.

### *Jargon*

Jargon (or technical language) is using words that are specific to a particular subject and will only be known by those connected with that subject.

### *Nuance*

A shade of colour, expression, meaning or feeling, e.g. a rich artistic performance, full of nuance.

### *Non-verbal Language*

The behaviours that accompany spoken language used in family,




© Department of Education WA 2013

school and community situations, e.g. body position, posture, facial expressions, eye contact, gestures and movement.

### *Overgeneralisation*

This is the use of sweeping statements that cannot be literally true in all cases, e.g. Girls are more talkative than boys.

### *Parody*

Imitating a speaker in such a way as to ridicule them, e.g. a comedian doing a caricature of the prime minister's voice.

### *Propaganda Devices*

Deliberate selection of language devices to turn listeners in the speaker's favour. See Figure 2.10.

**Propaganda Devices**

**Glittering Generality** Using general comments to make the generality attractive that the speaker's main point will not be questioned, e.g. an election candidate saying 'I am the best person for the job because I can deliver what this community requires'.

**Good ole Days** Selling a product or idea on the basis that it will help the buyer return to the simpler lifestyle of the 'good ole days', e.g. a soft drink commercial featuring a family sitting around the table talking and drinking home-made lemonade.

**Plain Folks** Indicating that a product was designed to meet the needs of everyday people, e.g. depicting a family buying a 4WD because it is solid and designed for practical families.

**Heartstrings** Using human emotions to sell a product, e.g. an undertaker explaining to a family that the type of casket they buy depends on how much they loved the departed one.

**New and Improved** Implying that a product is best because its features are new and improved, e.g. Brand Z computers are state of the art.

**Labelling** Influencing thinking about people, places and objects by choosing terms that carry strong disparaging or commendable connotations, e.g. a strong family man.

**Card Stacking** Misleading people by providing untrue or half-true facts, or by not providing pertinent information, e.g. promoting the nutritional benefits of a food rather than the amount of fat and sugar it contains; advertising a car as 'one owner' when it was actually owned by a rental company and driven by many people.

**That's Incredible** Using catch phrases and powerful modifiers in a bid to sell a product, e.g. the ultimate driving machine.

**Namecalling** Pointing out negative attributes so that an idea or product will be rejected, e.g. Our hamburgers have 25 per cent less fat than Brand X's hamburgers.

(Based on Devine 1982 as cited in Opitz & Zbaracki & Mann 2006)

**Figure 2.10**

### *Prosodic Features*

These are features of language that include pitch, volume, tempo and rhythm. These features can be used as devices to enhance the effects of speaking, e.g. varying the voice from a whisper to a loud voice when telling a story or trying to persuade an audience to accept a particular point of view.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Repetition*

The deliberate use of a word, idea or phrase over and over again to increase impact or to paint a more vivid picture.

### *Similes*

Similes are direct comparisons between two things to show their similarity, using the words *like* and *as*, e.g. As good as gold.

### *Slang*

Informal use of language; the use of slang can suggest a very personal situation. Slang can be used in a formal situation to create humour.

### *Style Shifting*

Style shifting is a term used to describe a student's proficiency in varying their speech according to the situation in which it is used. The style shifts from very formal to informal.

### *Tone*

Tone is the emotional message conveyed in a speech; it reflects the speaker's attitude to a given subject through the use of emotive words with positive or negative associations.

### *Testimony*

Testimony is the use of quotations from experts or people positively associated with a situation or product. It is used to state opinions designed as facts. Testimony also includes the use of statistics and is often found in advertising, e.g. Scientific research has shown that ... .

### *Verbal Language*

Verbal language can be shaped to position listeners towards certain beliefs, assumptions and points of view by using judgemental and emotive language, nuance, omissions, irony and humour. Verbal language can use code, dialect, technical terms, slang and jargon to exclude others and give power to certain groups in society. Meaning can be enhanced by varying pitch, pace, phrasing, pronunciation, sound and silence to influence the interpretation of a text.

## 6 Spoken Texts Can Be Investigated and Analysed to Reveal Their Values and Assumptions

Students are continuously immersed in spoken messages through the media and from the people they encounter in the community. Developing contextual understanding allows students to interpret these messages and to:


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

- recognise that spoken texts are not neutral
- evaluate the beliefs and values that underpin spoken texts
- make informed decisions about their own views on specific topics
- recognise ways in which people are positioned to show or acknowledge power
- become aware that language is constructed and manipulated to influence or persuade.

Provide spoken texts for students to investigate to help them develop these understandings, using some of the following ideas:

- Provide recordings from the past. These could be from radio broadcasts or old movies. Using spoken texts from the past highlights how language changes, and how values and beliefs change. Point out how the language used might have appeared neutral in a particular socio-cultural context. This will alert students to the ways that the language around them may seem neutral until examined closely.

Students could then move on to examine contemporary spoken texts, such as the following:

- Comparing and contrasting two reports on the same topic. For example, take a news report from a commercial station and compare it to the same story as reported on the ABC. Can students identify any bias or stereotyping in the reports?
- Listen to talkback radio. Does the presenter favour some points of view over others, or is there a balance?
- Listen to advertisements. How are facts presented? What persuasive language or devices are used? Are their any gender stereotypes? How are people of different ages represented?
- Listen to political broadcasts. How do politicians present information? What values can be identified?
- Listen to interviews. What types of questions are asked? How are people positioned as having status in the community?




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Developing Critical Awareness

It is important that students understand that language is a dynamic social process that shapes and is shaped by constantly changing social conditions. The use of English is inextricably involved with values, beliefs and ways of thinking about the world we inhabit. Students also need to develop the skills of critical literacy, especially an 'awareness of the relationship between language and power' (Curriculum Framework 1998). Using the types of questions listed in Figure 2.11 will help students develop critical awareness of the spoken language.

| Language Function | Language Features | Audience | Tone |
|---|---|---|---|
| What is the purpose of the spoken language?<br>What is the topic?<br>What form of language is this?<br>Where have I heard this type of speaking before?<br>What do I already know about this topic? What is new to me?<br>Are the ideas presented fact or opinion?<br>What is included? What is being left out?<br>Who would agree with what is being said? Who would disagree?<br>What can I tell about the speaker's attitude, bias or values? How? | How is the spoken text organised? Does the sequence help me or confuse me?<br>What kinds of sentences and clauses are used? How does it effect the interpretation of the message?<br>What type of vocabulary is used, e.g. descriptive, technical? Does the vocabulary include some and exclude others?<br>Does the speaker repeat key words or use a variety of related words?<br>How does the speaker try to position the audience, e.g. using graphs, data, and diagrams? | Who is the intended audience?<br>What is the relationship between the speaker and the audience?<br>What assumptions does the speaker make about the audience?<br>What prior knowledge would the audience need in order to fully understand the speaker?<br>Do the attitudes, beliefs and values of the audience match those of the speaker?<br>Who might agree with the speaker? Who might disagree with the speaker? | Does the speaker attempt to personalise the message for the listener? How?<br>Does the speaker try to create a distance from the listener? How?<br>Does the speaker take a position through the use of words such as can, could, should, would, may, might, must, ought, need, to? What effect does this produce?<br>Does the speaker use emotive language? What effect does this produce?<br>What words, phrases or clauses indicate the speaker's opinion?<br>What linguistic devices does the speaker use, e.g. analogy, idiom? What effect does this produce?<br>Does the speaker use language that is subjective or objective? |

(Adapted from 'Critical Literacy Framework', *Powerful Ways*, DET, WA, 2004)

**Figure 2.11 Table of Questions**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Embedding Speaking and Listening within the Classroom

Studying how spoken texts can vary in different contexts is an important focus area for contextual understanding. Teachers should provide a variety of purposeful contexts in the classroom, such as collaborative activities, plays, simulations and presentations of learning. These activities allow students to develop their understanding of how spoken language varies according to the context. These contexts can be easily created when designing units of work that use inquiry or collaborative learning processes. See the CD-ROM for the proforma, 'Negotiating an Inquiry Process'.

## Focusing on Contextual Understanding in a Unit of Work

It's important for teachers to plan and design a variety of contexts that involve students using speaking and listening skills; this allows students to develop the critical awareness needed for using spoken language in ways appropriate to the situation.

Students need experiences where they can explore, discuss and practise the spoken language required for different contexts. Units of work can provide many such experiences. The inquiry process is an effective approach to use, as learners focus on one topic while developing skills across several learning areas.

Speaking and listening play an important role in the inquiry process, as shown in the 'Post Office Inquiry' unit of work planned by Rebecca Lyons, a teacher in a Western Australian suburban school. Post Office Inquiry provided different contexts for Rebecca's Year One and Two students to use their speaking and listening skills and understandings. Rebecca used a planning format from Kath Murdoch (1998) to plan the inquiry unit, as shown in Figures 2.12 and 2.13. See the CD-ROM for the proforma 'Input — Reflection Planning Sheet'.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Integrated Unit of Work

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Year Level:** | 1 and 2 | **Focus:** | How has technology changed the postal service? Create a classroom post office. |
| **Theme:** | The changing postal service | **Duration:** | 6 weeks |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Learning Areas:** | English | Society and Environment |
| **Strand Focus:** | Speaking and Listening, Writing | Time, Continuity and Change |

| **SKILLS** | **Understandings** | |
|---|---|---|
| Analysing<br>Checking<br>Classifying ✓<br>Considering options<br>Cooperating ✓<br>Designing ✓<br>Elaborating<br>Estimating<br>Explaining ✓<br>Generalising<br>Hypothesising<br>Inferring<br>Justifying<br>Listening ✓<br>Locating information ✓<br>Making Choices<br>Note-taking<br>Observing ✓<br>Ordering events ✓<br>Organising<br>Performing<br>Persuading<br>Planning ✓<br>Predicting<br>Presenting in a range of ways ✓<br>Providing feedback<br>Questioning ✓<br>Reading<br>Recognising bias<br>Reflecting ✓<br>Reporting<br>Responding to others' work ✓<br>Restating<br>Revising ✓<br>Seeing patterns<br>Selecting information<br>Self-assessing<br>Sharing ideas ✓<br>Summarising<br>Synthesising<br>Viewing ✓<br>Visually representing<br>Working independently ✓<br>Working to a timeline | How the services of the postal system influence society and how the system has changed over time. Time and technology have changed the way people send and receive mail and packages. | |
| | **Related values/attitudes/issues** | |
| | During this unit of work the students will be given opportunities to work independently, with partners and in small groups. They will be encouraged to focus on being a good listener and speaker. Elements of speaking and listening will be modelled throughout the unit of work and through teacher direction (Y-charts, explicit teaching of strategies). The students will also coordinate their own learning through the inquiry approach. They will develop their own questions for guest speakers and excursions, inquiring through partner and small-group discussions, mind mapping, accessing prior knowledge and exploring possibilities through play in the classroom post office. | |
| | **Key concepts (big ideas)** | |
| | Change, communication, inquiring, speaking and listening | |
| | **Assessment routines and records:** | |
| | What needs to be set up at the beginning of the unit to ensure:<br>• assessment focus?<br>• systematic collection of data?<br>• ongoing reflection and self-assessment? | • Regular reporting, after individual and small-group work. (What did you find out?)<br>• Collection of work samples for portfolio package.<br>• Checklists for skills and anecdotal notes.<br>• Surveys, questionnaires, interviews. |
| | **Tuning in and preparing to find out:** | |
| | What varieties of activities will be used to:<br>• engage all students in the topic?<br>• assess prior knowledge?<br>• refine further planning?<br>• lead into the finding out experiences? | • Assess prior knowledge through brainstorming: 'What's a Post Office?'<br>• Why do we have post offices? (Think, pair, share; small-group discussions)<br>• Visual representation of knowledge through drawings and labelled diagrams.<br>• Teacher talk about the topic.<br>• Reading from non-fiction texts (*Our Amazing Mail: Australia Post*).<br>• Students sharing own stamp collections. |

**Figure 2.12 Plan for an Integrated Unit of Work**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

| Finding Out | Sorting Out |
|---|---|
| Experiences to help students gather new information about the topic. | Activities to help students process and work with the information and ideas they have gathered about the topic (including exploring values). |
| Collection of fiction and non-fiction texts to further stimulate students' curiosity, and to provide new information about the topic. | Personal learning time. Make and create things for the classroom post office. |
| Design a plan for a classroom post office: What will it look like? What do we need to include? | Dramatic play using the classroom post office. |
| What things does a post office need? Small-group work. Provide each group with a text to use as springboard for ideas. Make a list of things you think we will need. | |
| News Topic: 'What gets delivered to your letter box?' → | Share with the class the things you find in your letter box, e.g. newspapers, letters, bills, packages, brochures, catalogues. |
| Guest speaker from Australia Post. → <br>• Types of questioning (formal instruction). Open and closed questions discussed and taught through concept attainment.<br>• Write own question for the guest speaker. Discuss question with a partner before sharing ideas with the class. Write own question, support question with illustrations if needed. Leave space at the bottom of question sheet to include the answer to the question. | • Think, Pair, Share: 'What I found out'.<br>• Complete an individual reflection: 'What I found out'. How did you feel? |
| **Post Office visit** → <br>***Pre-visit***<br>• Through home learning task and family support, students to discuss who they would like to send a letter to. Ask family to help find the mailing address.<br>• Read *Dear Greenpeace* and *The Jolly Postman* as a preview to letter-writing format. (Letter format also supported through weekly home-learning message, daily messages on whiteboard and modelled writing.)<br>• Brainstorm things to include in letter and model letter writing using students' ideas.<br>• Write a draft letter, edit and publish (publishing using the computer).<br>• Revise speaking and listening: What is good speaking and listening? Discuss before visit.<br>• Mind photographs: Ask students to take imaginary cameras to the post office, to record images of things they see.<br>***During visit***<br>• A 'real' customer: Students to purchase a stamp at the counter and post their letters.<br>• Listen to the postmaster and ask questions or make comments. | ***After visit***<br>• Think, Pair, Share: What I found out during the visit.<br>• Draw 'mind photographs' of the things seen in the post office.<br>• Photo sort: Classify photographs under headings and create classroom chart.<br><br>Video Viewing: Watch Australia Post video 'The Journey of A Letter'.<br>Create own flow chart to illustrate what happens to a letter after we put it in the post box.<br><br>Design a stamp for display in classroom.<br><br>Personal reflections about speaking and listening.<br><br>Design a stamp based on the 'Down on the Farm' theme. Stamps to be sent to Landsdale Farm School for competition.<br><br>Re-evaluate classroom post office. What do we need to change? Work in small groups to add to classroom post office. |
| How has the postal service changed? Fiction text *The Postman's Race* and non-fiction text *Stepping Through History: The Post*. → | How has the postal service changed? Use drawings and labels to display understanding. |

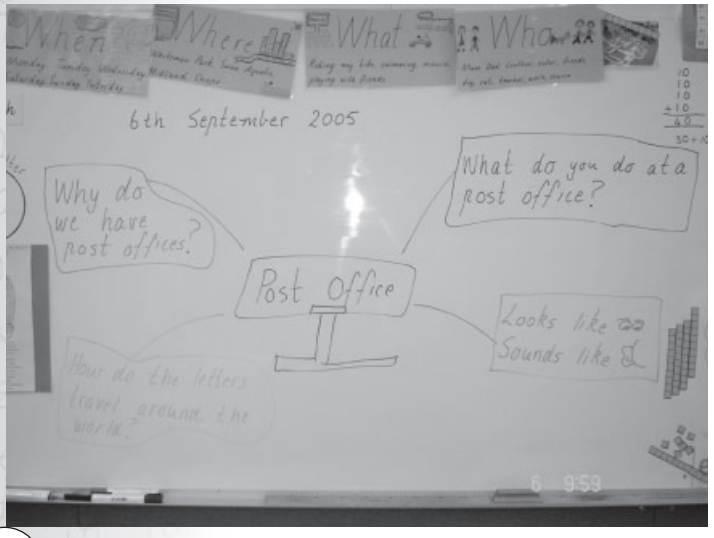



© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

| | |
|---|---|
| **Making Conclusions:**<br>Activities to 'pull it all together', to help students demonstrate what they have learnt, and to have them reflect on their learning | Group brainstorm: What have we done and found out? Record ideas through modelled writing.<br>Learning map: What have you learnt about post offices? Include the key scenes from the unit of work. Include reflective comments at each stage of the process using speech and thought bubbles.<br>Revisit group brainstorms and make changes and add new information.<br>Class newspaper: End-of-year reflection. Students to write about experiences associated with the unit. |
| **Process areas used** (underlined)**:** | **Arts:** dance, drama, media, music, visual arts<br>**Maths:** space, number, measurement, chance and data, working mathematically<br>**English:** writing, viewing, reading, speaking and listening, use of texts, conventions, processes and strategies, contextual understanding<br>**Technology and Enterprise:** materials, information, systems, technology process |
| **Going Further:**<br>Activities to challenge and extend (these may be in the form of further shared experiences, individual or group projects, etc.) | Personal projects and cooperative group tasks associated with the topic. Making things for the classroom post office, researching topics. |
| **Action:**<br>Activities to link theory to practice. To empower children to act on what they have learned and make links to their daily lives | Exhibition of children's work. Sharing information about the topic with a buddy class. Creating information captions for work around the classroom (outline what it is and why it was done). Each student is responsible for guiding a student from the buddy class through the exhibition. Students to make a pamphlet ('What I Will Share') to support the guided experience. |

Format for planning document taken from: Murdoch, Kath. (1998). *Classroom Connections: Strategies for Integrated Learning*. Victoria: Eleanor Curtain Publishing

**Figure 2.13 Finding Out, Sorting Out Table**




Students' questions were highlighted and displayed on the class planning board, as shown in Figure 2.14.

**Figure 2.14 Students' Questions**


FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

There were a variety of contexts created in the unit, providing opportunities for students to use and practise the speaking and listening required for those situations, as shown in Figure 2.15.

| Audience | Sorting Out | Sorting Out |
|---|---|---|
| Partner | • Share ideas for planning<br>• Prepare for excursion, e.g. What will you need to say when you are buying the stamp?<br>• Share new learning | Think, Pair, Share in the classroom |
| Australia Post Guest Speaker | • Listen to information<br>• Ask own prepared question<br>• Ask or give comments | Whole class assembled on mat |
| Australia Post Shop Manager | • Listen to information<br>• Ask for a stamp to post letter. Give thanks after the purchase<br>• Ask questions | At Australia Post shop |
| Teacher and other students | • Negotiate the planning for creating a post office in the classroom<br>• Preparing for the excursion to Australia Post, e.g. What is good listening?<br>• Brainstorm sessions | Whole class assembled on mat, ideas recorded on easel sometimes. |
| Peers | • Share what is known and has been learnt about the post office<br>• Planning: Discuss and decide what products to make for the class post office | Small-group tasks, including:<br>• group recording of main ideas<br>• making products<br>• projects |
| Peers | • Show what is known and has been learnt about the post office | Playing in the classroom post office |
| Buddy class | • Sharing learning<br>• Maintaining relationship with students from the buddy class | Guiding a student from the buddy class through the exhibition of learning about the post office |
| Self<br><br>Teacher and peer | • To find out what happens to the letters that were posted<br>• To record and share the journey of a letter | Viewing a film about the Journey of a Letter |
| Peers or family | • Describe what is being delivered to home mailbox | Choice of small group and whole class |

**Figure 2.15 Some of the Contexts Created in the Post Office Unit of Work**

Play is an important context, as it allows students to practise the speaking and listening required for different contexts. Figures 2.16–2.18 show students role-playing in their classroom post office.




© Department of Education WA 2013

**Figures 2.16–2.18 Purchasing from the Classroom Post Office Involved Asking for Items and Requesting Specific Amounts of Money**

Different audiences demanded different listening and speaking skills and behaviours, as shown in Figures 2.15–2.18.

**Figure 2.19 Glenda from Australia Post Answers Students' Questions**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

**Figure 2.20 The Manager of the Australia Post Branch Speaking to Students**

**Figure 2.21 Students Sharing Their Post Office Anecdotes**

**Figure 2.22 Students Discussing a Topic During 'Think, Pair, Share'**




© Department of Education WA 2013

One of the ways listening was assessed was by observing the items that students added to the class Post Office after visits to and from the local Australia Post branch, as shown in Figures 2.23–2.25.

Figure 2.23 Keys for the Post Boxes.

Figure 2.24 Post Boxes for Standard and Express Post.

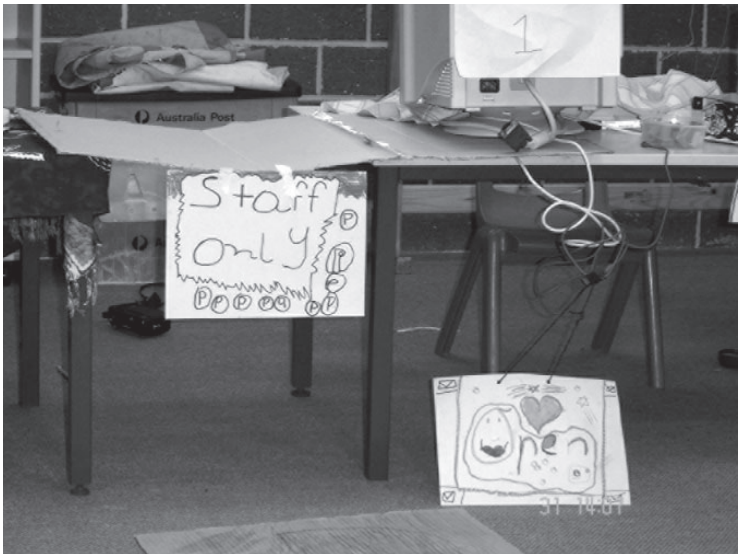



Figure 2.25 A 'Staff Only' Entrance to the Classroom Post Office.

Teachers may find it helpful to reflect on the way they have included speaking and listening in a unit of work. See the CD-ROM for the proforma 'Teacher Reflection on a Unit of Work'. Rebecca Lyons' reflections on the post office unit of work are listed in Figure 2.26.




© Department of Education WA 2013

**Why did you choose this unit?**
*After having a travel shop set up in the classroom and observing the interactions between students in the play situation, I thought 'What other situation could we set up to encourage learning through play and also provide opportunities for student-centred learning (to give the children opportunities to have a say in own learning, to create things and develop sense of ownership)?' I initiated interest in the topic by telling the students that we would change the travel shop into a post office. The children helped by drawing plans and thinking about the things we would need to make it similar to a 'real' post office. I also wanted to provide an environment that would provide opportunities for meaningful writing experiences, as there are some reluctant writers in the classroom.*

**What was your speaking and listening focus? Why?**
*The main speaking focus was to provide meaningful situations where the students could interact and discuss what they knew and ask questions to find out more. I wanted them to feel safe when contributing during whole-class and small-group discussions. Therefore I felt it was important to revise speaking and listening behaviours. Active listening was also a key focus, as the students would be recounting and describing what they saw and heard to complete tasks associated with the unit of work.*

**Did the unit of work allow for the speaking and listening you expected? How?**
*Yes. Due to the inquiry approach of the unit, I knew there would be lots of opportunities to share information with different audiences (whole class, group and partner; also outside the school environment with postal workers). The visit from the postal worker provided a great opportunity to ask questions. The children planned and prepared questions to ask the visitor. The students were well prepared and demonstrated appropriate listening and speaking behaviours.*

**What unplanned opportunities for speaking or listening came out of the unit?**
*The visit to the local post office provided more opportunities for listening than I expected. The postmaster's interactions with the students extended their thinking and initiated further enthusiasm for the unit of work.*

**What structures and routines did you have in place to support the implementation of the unit of work?**
*Throughout the year, the students have been working with partners and in small groups. They knew how to move into partner and group work and what behaviours to display in these situations. We used Y-charts and posters to outline the behaviours to use when working in groups. At the beginning of the year we established our classroom behaviours. We have used mind-mapping on previous occasions and this learning strategy was introduced through modelling on the easel. We have also been writing letters to each other.*

**What kinds of information or evidence were you able to collect?**
*Individual reflections about speaking, anecdotal notes and work samples. I found out about things the students knew that a paper and pencil test wouldn't have shown.*

**In terms of speaking and listening, what were the strengths of the unit of work?**
*The unit provided lots of opportunities for inquiry, allowing the students to ask questions and retell their own experiences and make connections with peers. The incursion (the visit from postal worker) and excursion (the visit to post office) also provided lots of opportunities to reflect and consolidate knowledge. Students were able to plan questions and listen and speak in different contexts. Doing this inquiry unit has led the students into independent research and they are choosing their own topic to undertake.*

**Is there anything you would do differently in a new unit of work?**
*I would organise visits from special guest speakers earlier on in the unit [during the first week], to enhance the finding-out stage of the inquiry.*

**Figure 2.26 Rebecca Lyons' Reflections on the Unit of Work 'Post Office Inquiry'**




© Department of Education WA 2013

CHAPTER 3

# Conventions

## Overview

This chapter focuses on building students' knowledge of speaking and listening conventions. Being able to control and understand these conventions allows students to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts. When listeners and speakers are choosing conventions for a particular context, they observe and reflect on the purpose, the situation and relationship between the speaker and the listener. This helps them to 'read' the context and choose appropriate conventions for their 'role' within that context.

Students need to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to select the appropriate conventions of Standard Australian English for particular purposes. This includes identifying and selecting the content, linguistic features, non-verbal conventions and medium appropriate to the context.

This chapter includes information on developing students' knowledge and understanding of conventions. The two sections are as follows:

- **Section 1 — Effective Teaching of Conventions**
- **Section 2 — Developing Understanding of Conventions**

**Figure 3.1**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

## SECTION 1

# Effective Teaching of Conventions

The long-term goal is for students to develop a repertoire of skills, knowledge and understanding that allows them to communicate effectively in a wide variety of contexts. The behaviours that facilitate effective communication are complex and have implications for students' lives in and out of school.

Students are faced with complex challenges when attempting to meet the demands of communicating in social and academic contexts. They must be able to choose the right words at the right time, as well as the right volume, the right tone of voice and the appropriate non-verbal behaviours to accompany their spoken interaction.

An 'analytic' approach, where students research a particular context for speaking and listening, will help them to discover the types of choices needed for a range of speaking and listening contexts. The model shown in Figure 3.2 can be used as a teaching and learning plan for all of the conventions outlined in this chapter.

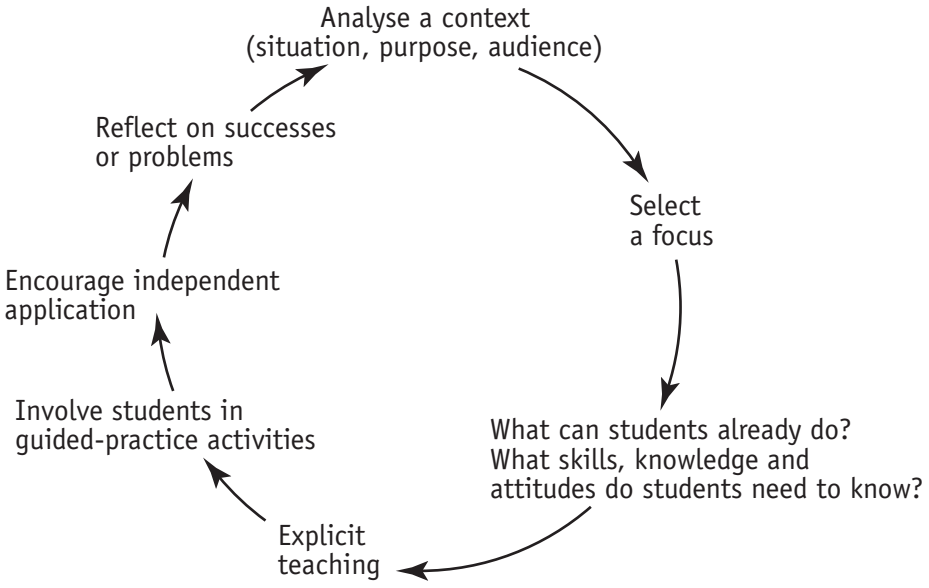



**Figure 3.2 Model of Analytic Approach**




© Department of Education WA 2013

## Analyse a Context

Teachers are able to assess students' prior knowledge and experience by discussing a specific context. For example, if students are going to host a parent evening to showcase their learning, they will need to know how to greet unfamiliar adults, how to explain an aspect of their work (perhaps using a rehearsed explanation), how to offer refreshments and how to farewell guests. They might need to discuss the type of listening that will be required, when questions will be asked and what type of questions they will be. Gathering this type of data helps teachers make decisions about the teaching and learning that needs to take place.

Hymes suggested that teachers and students can think of speech as taking place within a hierarchical structure, or a speech pyramid, containing a speech situation, speech events and speech acts (Hymes, cited Oliver et al 2003). Students would need to consider the conventions required within each level of speech.

### *Speech Situations*

Speech situations are situations associated with speech, e.g. ceremonies, sporting events, school assemblies, classroom lessons.

### *Speech Events*

Speech events are composed of one or more speech acts, e.g. conversation, instructions, anecdotes.

### *Speech Acts*

Speech acts are individual utterances, e.g. greeting someone, making a comment, thanking someone.

## Select a Focus

After analysing a context, teachers and students could select a study focus to suit a particular need. They might need to know more about the conventions required for a particular speech situation and, in turn, particular skills for speech acts. Teachers will need to highlight the demands of a particular context in order to help students understand the expected verbal and non-verbal behaviours.

Students will need to consider the following questions:

- What is the purpose for speaking?
- Who is your audience?
- What is the situation?


© Department of Education WA 2013

- Where have you heard this type of talk before?
- How will you organise what you want to say?
- What words or phrases will help you?
- What behaviours will be expected?

### *What Can Students Already Do?*

By discussing previous experience and prior knowledge, teachers will be able to assess what students do and do not know. Ask questions such as these:

- What has worked well for you in previous experiences?
- What have you found difficult in previous experiences?

### *Explicit Teaching and Problem Solving*

As students are involved in analysing, investigating and evaluating speaking and listening conventions, they need to have some way to record their findings. They could use video or audio recordings, or they could write about their experiences in a journal. Use class charts to remind students of the skills needed, or as a way of illustrating what they have learnt.

### *Guided-practice Activities*

Guided-practice activities involve structuring learning experiences to support and scaffold students as they practise their understandings, e.g. role-plays, generating and rehearsing particular phrases, practising appropriate body language and gestures, developing lists of effective words to use.

### *Encourage Independent Application and Reflection*

Encourage students to use the skills they have learnt for a particular context. The teacher and students can reflect on the experience and provide feedback about those conventions that were used well and those that need more practice. Involve students in self-assessment and goal setting.




© Department of Education WA 2013

SECTION 2

# Developing Understanding of Conventions

## Conventions of Social Interaction

Spoken language plays an important role in students' personal and social development. It allows them to gain an understanding of themselves and others, and strengthens social relationships. Students draw on their social skills to express their ideas, opinions and feelings with peers and teachers.

While most students will engage in social interaction without much conscious effort, such interactions are governed by intricate 'rules'. Many of these rules are assumed and will not be discussed; they are learnt through interacting with other speakers. Students learn through experience how to take turns in a conversation and how to repair a misunderstanding. Parents and teachers teach students about polite and acceptable behaviour. Students learn how to listen for various purposes, and are taught to respond according to the situation and expectations of those participating in the interaction. However, there are cultural and individual differences. Some cultures subscribe to different rules and some individuals may not acquire the 'rules' to the same extent as others (Oliver et al 2005).

### What Students Need to Know

Students become more adept at participating in conversations as they develop. Students in the early phases might need to be taught how to instigate and develop a conversation. Older students might need to learn about repairing miscommunication, or how to anticipate others' needs. Teachers can help build students' awareness of the way conversation works by considering the 'rules', which are often unconscious. Oliver, Haig and Rochecouste (2005) describe these rules as:

- Turn-taking
- Floor
- Adjacency pairs
- Repair
- Politeness.




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

### *Turn-taking*

Turn-taking is the way in which a speaker is chosen to have their turn in a conversation. The speaker might select who will speak next, or the speaker might choose to keep on talking. Students need to recognise pauses in conversation where they can take a turn, interrupt or change the subject. Turn-taking is often fluid when students are engaged in conversations or exploratory talk, with speech overlapping.

Turn-taking is more clearly defined in more formal situations. Teachers can explicitly teach turn-taking so that all students are encouraged to speak, e.g. seating students in a circle for a discussion so that everyone has a turn; asking students to work with a partner and choose who will go first.

### *Floor*

The person who is currently speaking is said to 'hold the floor'. During conversations, speakers and listeners use gestures, eye contact, body language and pauses in conversation to judge the moment when a change of speaker can occur. Provide opportunities for students to hold the floor for more extended periods in the classroom by introducing planned speaking events, e.g. interest talks, oral reports, debates, formal presentations.

### *Adjacency Pairs*

Adjacency pairs are sequences of two utterances next to each other, produced by two different speakers, e.g. a greeting and a response, a question and answer. Teachers may need to support students with words and phrases to meet this convention when they are speaking to unfamiliar people, such as visitors to the school.

### *Repair*

Repair occurs when speakers have to 'fix' something they have said, e.g. 'I said she, I mean *he*, could come'. Sometimes the listener will ask for a repair. This could be expressed through a question, a facial expression or body language. It is in this way that speakers and listeners negotiate meaning. A listener might:

- request clarification through a question, e.g. What do you mean? What does that word mean?
- request clarification through a statement, e.g. I'm not sure what you mean. I don't understand.
- repeat a statement or request to confirm what was said
- repeat phrases or ask questions to check their comprehension, e.g. Do you mean ... ? Have I got that right?




© Department of Education WA 2013

Students need to be encouraged to check that they understand what another person is saying, and to check that others understand them. Some students often misunderstand instructions or others' intentions; many misunderstandings can be avoided by teaching students to use words and phrases to check for meaning.

### *Politeness*

Politeness refers to ways of behaving that are expected in a specific cultural context. It is important that students are aware of these contexts and the type of language they require. This includes appropriate times for saying 'please', 'thank you' and 'excuse me'. Students should also be aware of using titles when appropriate, such as Mr, Mrs and Ms. Discuss how body language and tone of voice can be used to convey respect, in case students are in a situation where they need to convey respect to communicate effectively. Politeness is also about awareness of self-image and the self-image of others. Teachers should make students aware of contexts where they need to project a positive self-image, while simultaneously maintaining the positive self-image of others.

## Formulaic Speaking and Listening

There are some types of speaking and listening that are formulaic and follow predictable patterns. These formulaic patterns are highly dependent on context, where individuals will have different experiences. Teachers may discuss the types of speaking and listening that would be appropriate for these common interactions, generating alternatives for contexts that involve known people. Also discuss alternatives for situations that are familiar or unfamiliar, public or private.

### What Students Need to Know

Students will need to know the language, attitudes and behaviours that are needed when speaking and listening in Standard Australian English contexts:

- to greet someone
- to open and close a conversation
- to farewell someone
- to make introductions
- to thank someone, e.g. for a gift, for help, for kindness, for an outing or party
- to borrow something, e.g. from a friend, from the teacher
- to offer help
- to ask for help
- to interrupt, e.g. to ask a question in an urgent situation




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

- to purchase something
- to apologise
- to ask for permission
- to give a compliment
- to accept a compliment
- to offer an invitation
- to accept or decline an invitation
- to offer condolences
- to offer congratulations.

## Supporting Students in Developing Knowledge of Formulaic Speaking and Listening

Involving students in analysing and discussing formulaic speaking will help them develop their knowledge of when to use appropriate language. Students can share their own experiences and build a bank of words and phrases that could be used in specific contexts. Students could also survey adults they know and collect the words and phrases they use, or words and phrases that they have heard others using.

Involve students in role-plays, as role-plays give students the opportunity to practise the words and phrases that they may need at another time. In this way, students 'try out' the language and behaviours that they might be called on to use in awkward or stressful times. The table in Figure 3.3 contains examples of formulaic phrases drawn from Standard Australian English. Students would need to consider the context where these phrases would be most appropriate.

Different audiences will have an impact on students' choice of words and phrases. Oliver et al (2003) describe a task that could be adapted for a number of purposes. The example in Figure 3.5 is based on giving a compliment; ask students to consider how their choice of words or phrases would change depending on who they were talking to. They would need to brainstorm reasons for giving a compliment, such as:

- appearance, e.g. a haircut, new clothes
- an act of kindness or thoughtfulness towards another person
- an achievement, e.g. scoring a goal at soccer, playing a piece of music at a concert
- caring for others, e.g. preparing a special meal.




© Department of Education WA 2013

| Purpose | Phrase |
|---|---|
| Greeting | *Hello, how are you?*<br>*Hello, come and join us.*<br>*Hi, it's great to see you!* |
| Farewell | *Bye, thanks for coming.*<br>*See you soon.*<br>*Thank you, bye for now.*<br>*See ya later.* |
| Apology | *I wanted to say sorry about …*<br>*[Paul] I made a mistake when … and I want to apologise.*<br>*I said a really dumb thing …* |
| Thanking | *Thank you.*<br>*That's great, thank you.*<br>*I wanted to let you know how grateful I am for …*<br>*Thanks for …* |
| Compliments | *I want to tell you how good …*<br>*It was great the way you …*<br>*You really helped me when …* |
| Condolences | *I was sorry to hear about …*<br>*I just heard your sad news and wanted you to know how sorry I am.* |
| Invitations | *Come and join us (group, discussion, game)*<br>*I'm having a get-together (party, the gang is coming over) would you like to come?*<br>*Would you like to come to …?*<br>*There's a good (movie, concert, event) on, would you like to go?* |
| Getting someone's attention in a familiar situation | *Say the person's name.*<br>*Excuse me, [Harry] …*<br>*Sorry to interrupt, [Daria], but…* |
| Getting someone's attention in an unfamiliar situation | *Hello, could you … I would like to … Can you tell me …*<br>*I need some help to …*<br>*Excuse me …* |

**Figure 3.3 Examples of Formulaic Phrases**

**Figure 3.4 'Thanks For a Great Season, Mate!' (The coach uses language appropriate to the context.)**




© Department of Education WA 2013

| | Your best friend | Your sibling | Your teacher | A service provider | An aunty or uncle | Grandparents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Complimenting _____ | | | | | | |

**Figure 3.5 Example of Task 'To Give a Compliment'**

## Vocabulary

Everybody has command of different sets of vocabulary. Very young children are able to respond correctly to spoken words before they are able to produce those words themselves. They learn that things have names and they learn to put words together. A process of trial and error is used, starting a lifelong process where we learn and adopt new vocabulary. As students develop, they need to be able to draw from different sets of vocabulary. Oliver, Haig and Rochecouste (2005) describe these different sets of vocabulary as follows:

- **Formal Words:** Where we choose words that reflect a particular relationship, e.g. Good morning instead of Hi or How ya goin'? We may choose more formal alternatives, e.g. purchase instead of buy.
- **Occupational or Subject-specific Words:** Where we need to name objects and concepts that we work with, e.g. teachers refer to curriculum, outcomes and assessment; scientific concepts involve classification, species and hypotheses.
- **Casual Words:** Words that we use with close friends, e.g. a coldie, a barbie, a chat.
- **Family Words:** Words that are used within our families, e.g. brekkie time, tellie.

It is important for students to build the knowledge and understanding that enable them to choose the vocabulary appropriate for various contexts. Subject-specific words or casual words between friends or peers can be used as a kind of shorthand in some contexts. In other contexts, this use of vocabulary may confuse or exclude certain members of an audience. In some cases, people may be attempting to exert power by the way they use vocabulary. It is important for students to choose vocabulary that is appropriate to the purpose and situation, based on an understanding of the needs of their audience.

### What Students Need to Know

When working with students to expand their vocabulary, emphasise the need for words that meet the needs of their particular audience. It is more important for students to convey their message succinctly




© Department of Education WA 2013

and effectively than it is to use big words or more words. Students will benefit from teaching and learning experiences that equip them with vocabulary to control the functions of language.

Vocabulary for academic learning is linked to the teaching of concepts. Graves and Graves (1994) point out that when a concept is totally unfamiliar to the students, they need to develop an understanding of the concept first, then vocabulary can be introduced. However, if the concept is familiar to students, then introducing new vocabulary to describe it is a matter of connecting new words to an already understood concept. For example, if students already understand the concept of fair and unfair, teaching vocabulary such as bias, justice, favouritism or discrimination is a matter of linking new words to a known concept.

## Supporting the Development of Vocabulary

Students learn new words directly and indirectly. This is done through discussions and conversations, listening to literature read aloud, listening to radio programs, and listening to and viewing television and movies. For students in the early phases, this learning is assisted when adults or older children participate in these experiences and explain new vocabulary to them. Research has shown that when adults use techniques such as definitions, synonyms, inference and comparison, the child's understanding of what the new words mean is helped by their prior experience and by the social or physical context of the interaction (Dickenson and Tabors 2002). Direct teaching is also important, as it helps students acquire the specific vocabulary they need for academic learning and unfamiliar social contexts.

## Learning Vocabulary Indirectly

Providing students with meaningful first-hand experiences will help them to develop and use new vocabulary. They can gain these experiences from activities inside or outside the classroom.

- Involve students in inquiry-based learning situations that require searching out the vocabulary needed to explain new ideas.
- Involve students in visiting places of interest in the community to interact with community members.
- Involve students in discussions that require giving and justifying opinions.
- Develop topic knowledge by immersing students in investigations and experiments.
- Involve students in language experience activities such as making paper, cooking food, creating art and investigating technology.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Provide opportunities for students to pursue and discuss topics that interest them.
- Provide opportunities for students to participate in conversations with an interested adult.

## Learning Vocabulary Directly

There are two useful criteria to use when deciding which words should be taught directly to students.

The first group of words will be those that are needed to socially interact with others. For example, students may need to learn cooperative group skills, how to ask questions when planning to interview a community member or how to thank a guest at a school assembly. Plan for these situations with the students and teach the words that will be needed. Allow time for students to practise these words through role-play or rehearsal with a partner.

The second group of words are those that are essential for understanding the major concepts, issues or themes needed for a unit of work. Words in this group are often called *selection-critical words, subject-specific words, topic words* or *technical terms*. Teach these words as they are needed, allowing time for students to use and practise these words in meaningful contexts. New vocabulary can be highlighted in some of the following ways:

- Provide opportunities for students to listen to the way words are used in different contexts. Provide recorded news reports and invite students to notice the way words are used, e.g. an accident victim might be reported as 'clinging to life'; an armed robbery might include 'a malicious and unprovoked attack'.
- Provide opportunities for students to analyse recorded spoken texts for vocabulary used in a particular form, e.g. watching a cooking program in order to list the vocabulary used when giving instructions.
- Ask students to name a topic that interests them, e.g. dinosaurs, racing cars, playing soccer. Have students list the words associated with their specialised topic and then share their list with others, explaining any words that are unfamiliar to others.
- Explicitly teach the new vocabulary that will be needed for a new unit of work, e.g. a particular form of visual art may require students to understand words such as perspective, view, medium, impressionist and gouache. These words should be recorded or displayed in some way.
- Create opportunities for students to use new vocabulary. For example, students could hold an art exhibition for parents or other students at the end of a unit of work. At the exhibition they




© Department of Education WA 2013

could act as guides, using and explaining technical words to an audience unfamiliar with such terms.

- Discuss the way that words come and go from the English language, e.g. Ask students to name the words that they might use instead of 'good' or 'bad'. Ask students to list the words their parents might have used when they were at school. Watch old movies as a class and take note of words that are no longer commonly used.
- Teach *signal words*. Signal words are the words used to organise thoughts when speaking for particular purposes:
  - Words associated with *sequence*, e.g. first, next, firstly, secondly, finally.
  - Words to describe *direction*, e.g. above, below, along, under, around, through.
  - Commands needed for a *procedure*, e.g. put, add, pour, mix.
  - *Descriptive* words to describe people, places and things.
  - *Result* words, e.g. as a result, so, accordingly, therefore.
  - *Contrast* words, e.g. however, but, in contrast, on the other hand.

## Developing an Interest in Vocabulary

It is important to promote the enjoyment of language and the satisfaction of having just the right word when it is needed. Select from the following ideas and suggestions.

### *Text Selection*

Make sure that students are exposed to a wide variety of spoken texts, composed to meet a variety of functions. These could be texts recorded from the radio, television, movies (both from the past and present) or everyday events. Discuss the words that were used and find definitions for any unknown words. List the words that students might want to use in their own speaking.

### *Poetry*

Provide opportunities for students to recite poetry, jingles and rhymes. This provides students with an understanding of the way language works, how it is phonetically structured, and how meaning is captured. Promote poetry as a fun way of 'playing' with language.

### *Storytelling*

When teachers are storytellers, they capture students' imagination and attention in powerful ways. Particular words and phrases can be highlighted using voice, gestures and facial expressions. The




© Department of Education WA 2013

context created helps students to remember vocabulary as they make personal connections with both the storyteller and the story.

### *Reading Aloud*

Reading aloud allows teachers to expose students to a wide variety of text forms. It also allows them to teach new vocabulary in a meaningful context. Teachers can stop and explain new vocabulary as it is encountered, or come back to it at the end of a paragraph or page. Teachers can invite students to reread the surrounding text and predict the meaning of a new word. Students could later consult a dictionary to confirm or adjust their predictions.

### *Role-Plays and Drama*

Role-plays and drama are useful problem-solving activities. They can be used when students are going to be confronted with new or challenging speaking and listening situations. Students could practise appropriate vocabulary for various situations, e.g. showing visitors around the school; hosting an exhibition for parents; interviewing a community member; going on work experience.

# Developing Grammar

## What is Grammar?

Grammar refers to the rules and systematic relationships that are used to organise language and its meaning. Grammar is used to make meaning during reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. It involves knowledge of the sounds of language (or *phonology*), knowledge of individual words (or *lexis*), the order of words in speech (or *syntax*) and the overall structure of a spoken text (*discourse*).

Grammar in spoken language needs to be addressed differently to the grammar of written language. Written language is stable and can be reviewed over and over again; however, speech is often fleeting and is highly dependent on the context in which it occurs. Most speaking is spontaneous and involves other people. It is important that students are not judged on their use of grammar in spoken language in the same way as they would be judged when writing. It is only in formal planned speeches that the grammar of spoken language and written language are similar; however, as the poet T.S. Eliot said, '... an identical spoken and written language would be almost intolerable; if we spoke as we write, we would find no one to listen; and if we wrote as we speak, we should find no one to read. The spoken and written language must not be too near together, as they must not be too far apart'.




© Department of Education WA 2013

## Linguistic Structures of Speech

It is important to consider the ways in which the linguistic structures of speech differ from those of writing.

**Phonology** Phonology refers to the *sounds* in a spoken language. Speech sounds vary in spoken language even though they remain consistent in writing; for example, many Australians do not pronounce the *a* in secretary or the *o* in territory but do pronounce them in related forms such as *secretarial* or *territorial* (Black 1995).

**Lexis** Lexis refers to the words in a language (or the vocabulary). In writing, words are clearly defined with spaces on either side, but words in spoken language can slide together at times. The nature of vocabulary use also differs between speech and writing. Speech is much less lexically dense than writing, and speakers usually select less complex vocabulary (Haig 2005 unpublished notes).

**Syntax** The sentence may be the basic structure for writing, but the clause is the basic structure of speech. In many cases, single words or short phrases are used as the speakers take turns. Each utterance is about seven seconds long, which is about as much as short-term memory can process at once. Rather than sentences, spoken language is usually composed of chains of clauses joined by simple conjunctions, the most common being 'and'. These responses are appropriate; saying more would be redundant and inefficient (and tedious to others taking part in the interaction). The structure in speaking differs from writing in that the message goes across turns and meaning is progressively built by the participants. Features such as hesitations, repetitions, false starts, floor holders (e.g. umm, ah, you know, like) are common and normal in speech, as they allow thinking time to actively contribute to the construction of meaning. Even in formal speech, the grammatical structures are less complex. Listeners do not process language in the same way as readers; readers control their access to the text and can moderate the cognitive demands it makes (Haig 2005 unpublished notes).

**Discourse** At the text level, speech and writing also differ considerably. Cohesion in most dialogue goes across turns and is collaboratively built by the participants. Monologues occur rarely in everyday life and tend to be more planned. Monologues have structures that are more like writing (although they can't be as dense as writing if they are to be effective).

Because of the limits to the way we process spoken language, effective speakers support their listeners by composing texts that


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

use fewer words than they would use if they were writing; they use vocabulary that is well known to their audience and use simple sentence structures with little subordination. They also use judicious repetition and paralinguistic features that support meaning-making and help retain the audience's involvement (Oliver et al 2005).

### Teaching Grammar

Most students have already acquired the basic syntactic, semantic and pragmatic elements of their home language before they come to school, through using spoken language on a daily basis. In order for students to build on their understanding and use of grammar, it is important that teachers:

- value the language that each student brings to school
- help students to become competent users of Standard Australian English, and to know when it is required
- help students develop the knowledge to meet the demands of different language functions.

It is important to link the teaching of grammar to language functions and students' needs. This can be done by involving students in purposeful speaking and listening for social and academic purposes, and by making sure they understand the role of speaking in community life.

### What Students Need to Know

It is important that students understand that the way they choose to speak will depend on the context. How they speak to close friends in private will differ greatly to the choices they make when speaking to an adult in a position of authority in public. Even in the most formal of speaking contexts, speech should not sound like writing and it should not contain the same formal grammatical structures.

## Features of Spoken Language

Communicating is more than just words. The way we use our voice, facial expressions and body language affects the messages we are trying to give. Students are not always aware that their posture or the way they approach another person speaks volumes in itself.

By highlighting the expressive nature of the way a person uses their body and voice, teachers can help students to become critically aware of the choices they are making. The aim is to teach students to choose behaviours that will equip them to express themselves in effective ways in a variety of contexts.




© Department of Education WA 2013

## What Students Need to Know

### *1 Use of Voice*

Spoken language has intonation patterns and pauses that convey meaning and attitudes.

**Volume**

Volume depends on the needs of the situation, purpose and audience. There are contexts that require loud voices, such as performing a play at assembly or cheering at a sporting event. There are also times when quiet voices are appropriate, such as working in a library or speaking to someone next to you during a movie at the cinema. A voice should generally be loud enough that the intended audience can hear and understand the message being given. By varying volume, students can achieve emphasis or dramatic impact when recounting events, telling a story or persuading an audience.

Involve students in making agreements about the working noise level in the classroom, taking into account the noise level of groups, pairs and individual work. One example is to use a voice that can be heard comfortably by another person at a distance of about 30 cm, known as a 30 cm voice (Bennet et al 1991). Students could make charts that indicate the expected noise level in the classroom.

**Intonation**

Intonation is the pattern of pitch changes in speech; a downward intonation indicates that a message is complete, while an upward intonation indicates a question.

**Pitch**

Pitch is usually used to express emotion. When we're excited, our pitch rises.

**Pauses**

Pauses are moments of silence between phrases; they are used to separate ideas and hold attention. Pausing is a useful device when giving formal presentations, as it gives the audience time to process information. It can also be used to create a dramatic impact.

**Pronunciation**

Pronunciation is the way that words are said. Young students may have difficulty in pronouncing the sounds in some words and will benefit from hearing those words modelled in meaningful contexts. Pronunciation varies across regions, and with students who have learnt English as a second language. It is important that students


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

know the accepted pronunciation of words in Standard Australian English for contexts when standard pronunciation is expected.

**Markers**
Speakers use markers to give themselves thinking time, or to provide structure when giving explanations, descriptions or instructions, e.g. hmm, err, ahh. Markers can also be used as staging cues, e.g. firstly, secondly, one final thing.

**Acknowledging phrases**
These are phrases said by listeners to acknowledge and encourage speakers, e.g. I see; really; oh, you never!

### *2 Non-verbal Behaviours*

Non-verbal behaviours are known as *paralanguage*; they are non-verbal features that accompany speaking and listening and are used to enhance meaning and convey emotion. When we consider paralanguage we think of *how* something is said, rather than *what* is said. Paralanguage may be expressed consciously or unconsciously and can include body position, posture, gestures, facial expressions, movement and proximity (as well as pitch, volume, tone, pace and intonation of speech). Some non-verbal behaviours are outlined below.

**Kinesics**
Kinesics are gestures that equal words or phrases and may replace them, e.g. stop, go, come here, hurry up, be quiet. Gestures can also illustrate what we are saying and accompany speech.

**Affective displays**
Affective displays include posture and facial expressions that indicate emotional state, e.g. surprise, pain, anger, thought, contentment.

**Proximity**
Proximity is the amount of personal space between people who are talking. The distance depends on the relationship between them, or whether the situation is personal, social or public. The amount of personal space required may also depend on personality or culture.

**Eye contact**
Eye contact is the use of the eyes or gaze in face-to-face communication. The degree of eye contact often depends on the relationship between the communicators. Eye contact has an important effect on the communication of both speaker and listener.




© Department of Education WA 2013

The speaker seeks feedback and reinforcement; the listener may encourage or terminate the conversation.

## Supporting Students in Using Language Features

Teachers may use an analytical approach to help students understand when to choose certain language features. Involve students in analysing contexts, determining what it is they know and what it is they need to know. Decide what needs to be taught explicitly and what needs to be practised before students are required to implement skills independently. The following points should be considered when deciding on teaching and learning experiences. Do students know:

- how to approach people confidently?
- how to acknowledge when someone has spoken to them?
- when to establish eye contact?
- how to assert themselves appropriately with peers and adults?
- how to modify their voice in order to express their message effectively?
- how to use body language to support their intended message?
- how to interpret the body language of others?

Explore the features of spoken language through role-play, or by directing students to notice these features when analysing recorded spoken texts.


© Department of Education WA 2013

# Embedding the Conventions of Speaking and Listening within the Classroom

As part of daily classroom interactions, students need to learn the conventions of Standard Australian English required for a range of school and community contexts. The conventions required for particular situations can be developed through units of work. Units of work that have a collaborative learning approach, and involve authentic audiences, allow students to interpret and use appropriate speaking and listening conventions.

## Focusing on Conventions in a Unit of Work

Units of work provide opportunities for students to use speaking and listening in different contexts, teaching them that different conventions are required for different situations. A good starting point when including conventions in a unit of work is to identify the conventions required for different situations; this is a useful step for both teachers and students. A proforma 'Planning For Skills in a Speaking and Listening Situation' is provided on the CD-ROM.

Western Australian teachers Sarah Ryan and Christine Powell found a perfect opportunity to develop a unit of work that focused on conventions when it was their class's turn to run the school assembly. Regular school assemblies are a feature of the Western Australian suburban school, where each class takes on the role of conducting the assembly. The class's role is to introduce the guests and regular speakers, lead the national anthem and to entertain the audience of students, parents and community members. Entertainment can include a performance or a presentation, e.g. singing, sharing information, drama. Sarah and Christine developed a unit of work around the assembly, involving the students in determining the speaking and listening required for the assembly and working in small groups to plan and prepare for the running of the assembly, as shown in the plan in Figure 3.6.

Students investigated the speech acts and events required to conduct the assembly by recording the information on a speech pyramid, as shown in Figure 3.7. This gave students the framework and background knowledge to list the speaking and listening skills they would need to learn.




© Department of Education WA 2013

| **UNIT OF WORK** – *Assembly* | | **Class** *C9/C10* | | **Date** *November 2005* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Phase** | **Negotiating** | **Organisation** | **Main Tasks** | **Focus for Assessment** |
| Tuning in | *What do we already know about running the school assembly?*<br>*What do we have to do?* | ✓ Whole class<br>✓ Small group<br>✓ Individual | • Individual to partner: Think, Pair, Share<br>• Partner to whole class: share ideas with whole class<br>• Record and organise or cluster main points and ideas on large sheets of planning paper | **Observe and note**<br>Who contributes?<br>How do individual students group or categorise the ideas? |
| Establishing the problem or inquiry.<br>**Making it matter** to the students | *What do we need to know? Why?*<br>*What do we need to be able to do?*<br>*What skills do we need to run the school assembly?* | ✓ Small group | • Small groups to observe the next assembly and view a video of a past assembly.<br>• Use observations to create a Speech Pyramid.<br>• Small groups use data from Speech Pyramid activity to complete this T-chart:<br>What we need to know \| Skills we need<br>• Compile each group's list and return them to the group; have students tick what they can do and circle what they need to learn. | **Analyse observation sheets**<br>Discuss with student, e.g. Why did you include this?<br>**Peer/student/teacher discussion**<br>How well did I speak in my group? Did other people understand what I meant? |
| Conducting the inquiry.<br>Solving the problem | *How can we find out?*<br>*Who can help us?*<br>*How do we learn the skills we need to run the assembly?* | ✓ Whole class | Whole-class discussion<br>1. Small groups to share their list of what they need to learn to do.<br>2. Brainstorm ideas for how the skills can be learnt.<br>3. Cluster and organise the suggestions in these categories: Can be done or taught in class; Need other people to teach us.<br>4. Discuss ways students could approach other people to teach them, e.g. music teacher, student councillors. (Take these notes to plan for the small-group rotations.) | **Who contributes?**<br>Record students' names next to the brainstorm.<br>**Speaking and listening skills**<br>Team teacher to record as partner teacher observes. |
| Keeping it authentic | *How do we show the skills we have learnt?*<br>*What jobs do we need to do for the assembly?*<br>*Who needs to do what?* | ✓ Whole class<br>✓ Small group | • Whole-class discussion: plan the outline for the assembly. List and order students' suggestions.<br>• Allocate sections to small groups:<br>1. Introduction section, e.g. principal's address<br>2. Entertainment section<br>• Small-group rotations to prepare for the assembly. See planning sheet.<br>1. Working independently to organise their own section for the assembly.<br>2. Working with teacher, assistant or visitor to develop skills identified and needed for the presentation. | **Small group**<br>What speaking skills do students identify?<br>What ideas do students have for their performance?<br>How do students express their ideas for the group? |
| Sharing learning | *Where else can we use the skills we used for the assembly?*<br>*Who needs to know about our skills and feelings about running the assembly?* | ✓ Whole class<br>✓ Small group<br>✓ Individual | • Think, Pair, Share other situations where the skills could be used. Whole-class discussion and small-group dramatisation of some of the suggestions.<br>• Individual journal entry on who needs to know about our skills and feelings. Collect entries to read, then negotiate with students how they will present the learning they would like to share. | **Collect and analyse journals**<br>What speaking and listening skills were identified?<br>How well did students recognise verbal and non-verbal skills needed for effective for performing at the assembly? |
| Reflecting | *How do we feel about the way we prepared for the assembly?*<br>*What could we do differently for the next assembly?* | ✓ Small group | • Small-group discussion using the reflection questions.<br>• Use a rating scale, with students standing to show the extent of their group's feeling about the assembly, starting from 'very proud of our effort' and going to 'would like to improve on our effort'.<br>• Record any main points for next assembly. | **Observe**<br>Did students rate sensibly on rating scale?<br>**Discuss with students and make note**<br>How did students decide to share? Who used speaking? Why? |

**Figure 3.6 Plan for a Unit of Work**


FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

The speech pyramid highlighted the components of the assembly, allowing teachers and students to separate the speech situation, speech events and individual speech acts and identify the skills needed.

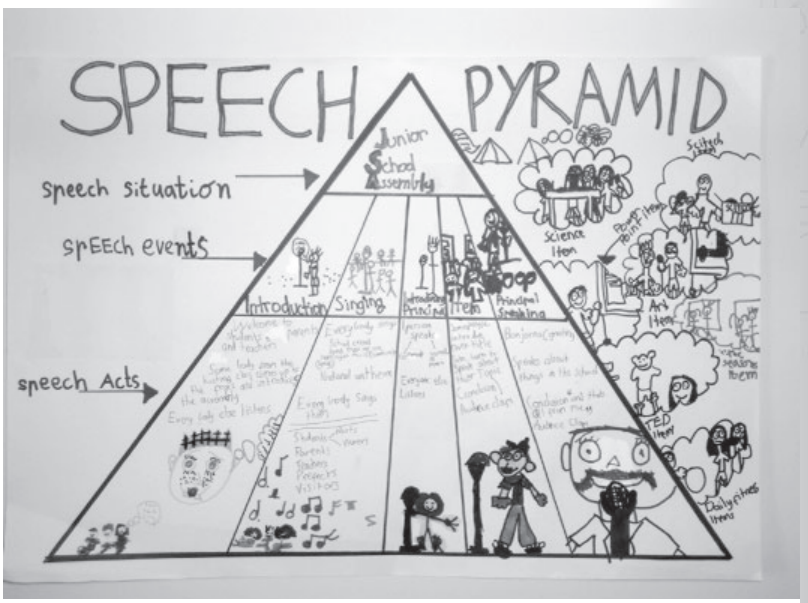



**Figure 3.7 Example of a Student's Speech Pyramid**

Students were asked to think about the speaking and listening skills required for the tasks they needed to do for the assembly. The students whose plan is shown in Figure 3.8 realised they needed to include background information because the audience may not have been to Scitech (a science education centre). They also felt that they needed to learn to face the audience when they were using their props and to speak slowly into the microphone. Previously, some of the group had spoken quickly because they were nervous using the microphone. The group's notes were used to help plan and negotiate future activities for this group as they prepared and rehearsed for the assembly.

Recorder – Josh

**ASSEMBLY PREPARATION**

**GROUP -** Scitech group –

| What are our two jobs for the assembly? | What skills do we need to learn? | What do we need? Who will help us? |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Introducing/ thanking – thank the principal Introduce our item | To Face the Audience To Talk slower | Practise with the class watch our practise video |
| 2. Entertainment/information Telling The audience About our visit to Scitech | Giving The Audience Enough Information Using prop s to help show what we did at scitech | Look back at our excursion Recounts Writing the ideas and putting them in balloons Helpers from the audience will pop them |

Our teacher's feedback and comments –
You will have three rehearsals. We will film it twice so you can see how you are improving. Looking back at your recounts will be very helpful! Good thinking. Popping balloons should be a good way for you to involve the audience, as well as showing them how Scitech can teach you about air and other Science ideas.

**Figure 3.8 Group Planning for an Assembly**




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Reflection*

After the assembly, reflection was used to support students in their learning, allowing them to consider how they felt about their efforts and performance. Students shared their reflections and knowledge about the assembly, selecting their audience and presentation format in negotiation with their teachers. See the CD-ROM for the proforma, 'Observing Our Class.'

**Figure 3.9 Mikayla's Reflections on the Assembly**

Mikayla chose to share her reflection with her small group and her family; she recorded her plan for her discussion with them in her exercise book, as shown in Figure 3.9.

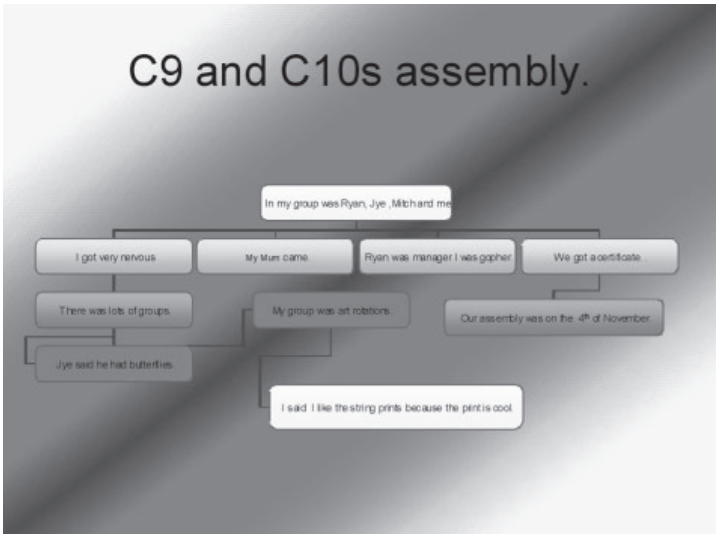



**Figure 3.10 Joshua's Reflection on the Assembly**

Joshua shared his reflections and ideas about the assembly with a group of friends from a buddy class. He used a PowerPoint display to guide his discussion, as shown in Figure 3.10.




© Department of Education WA 2013

CHAPTER 4

# Processes and Strategies

## Overview

This chapter focuses on how students can apply their knowledge and understandings to compose, comprehend and respond to spoken language. Some processes and strategies are used intuitively, particularly when speaking and listening in familiar contexts with known people. However, unfamiliar contexts require deliberate selection and manipulation of speaking and listening processes and strategies.

The intent of this chapter is to provide teaching and learning experiences that can be applied to all phases of speaking and listening. Students need to develop a broad repertoire of processes and strategies that allow them to communicate effectively for a range of different purposes, audiences and situations. These processes and strategies are not hierarchical or specific to a phase.

A range of processes and strategies can be introduced, developed and consolidated at all phases of development. This chapter is designed to support the Major Teaching Emphases listed under the 'Processes and Strategies' aspect at each phase of development in the *First Steps Speaking and Listening Map of Development*.

By explicitly teaching processes and strategies, and providing opportunities for students to analyse, use and reflect on the strategies in authentic situations, teachers enable students to develop the skills and understandings to communicate effectively in a wide range of contexts.

This chapter contains one section:

- **Section 1 — Speaking and Listening Processes and Strategies**




© Department of Education WA 2013

SECTION 1

# Speaking and Listening Processes and Strategies

Using spoken language requires people to think about how they are making meaning. Speakers want to convey meaning clearly to listeners. Listeners want to make meaning from what is said, while at the same time deciding on what sort of role they must play in the interaction. In many situations speakers and listeners will speak and listen intuitively, without much conscious thought or effort. However, when we are speaking or listening in unfamiliar contexts the cognitive requirements become much greater; we have to become aware of our thinking. As students get older, they participate in a wider range of social interactions, e.g. family and community, workplace, higher education. The cognitive demands become more complex, requiring students to draw on a wide range of skills to meet their needs.

Effective teachers are able to plan learning experiences and instruction that help students to become confident and competent communicators in a range of contexts. Students need to be able to efficiently select and use the processes and strategies that will help them to communicate and interact with others. Students should have knowledge of:

- the grammatical features of Standard Australian English
- text structures and organisation
- topics and concepts
- cultural and world matters
- metalinguistic awareness.

## Developing Metalinguistic Awareness

Metalinguistics is the ability to think about language and talk about it. Developing metalinguistic awareness is a critical element in a student's ability to effectively select and discuss the use of processes and strategies appropriate to their needs. Having metalinguistic awareness allows students to be aware of the following:

- Different audiences and how they affect the choice of language, e.g. using vocabulary; varying intonation, tone, pace and volume.
- Social situations and how they affect the use of language, e.g. when it is appropriate to speak and when it's not; when it is



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

okay to ask questions and when it's not; who talks first and who can have the final say.
- Language behaviour appropriate to the context, e.g. using non-verbal communication such as facial expression, eye gaze, stance, posture, proximity, touching and gesture, as well as nodding and saying 'Mmm, okay' to confirm comprehension.

Metalinguistic awareness allows students to understand and discuss how language is used; it gives them the ability to reflect on and talk about how they use language. Teachers need to support their students as they gain strong metalinguistics awareness. It should not be assumed that students acquire this knowledge merely by being exposed to it, as this knowledge is too important to be left to chance (Bowey 1988). Explicit teaching of speaking and listening processes and strategies will help students develop the skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes they need to interact confidently in a variety of contexts. These processes and strategies are not hierarchical or specific to a phase; students at all levels will need to be learning about and using a wide range of processes and strategies.

## What Are the Speaking and Listening Strategies?

Effective speakers and listeners use a wide range of strategies to help them comprehend and construct spoken language.

Students need to be explicitly taught how to select and use a wide range of strategies when speaking and listening, and to understand that their use of these strategies will be determined by context, text form and audience (and their familiarity with these three elements). Some strategies will be more appropriate to use during speaking and listening; others are more suited to reflection and review. Students need to be able to apply these strategies throughout the speaking and listening process, e.g. using the 'determining importance' strategy before speaking to determine how much detail a particular audience will need to understand the message. A listener might use the 'determining importance' strategy prior to listening to determine which information to closely attend to and retain, and after listening for reflecting on the message.

Following is a list of the main speaking and listening strategies:
- Predicting
- Self-talk
- Self-questioning (includes hypothesising, reasoning and clarifying)




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Visualising and creating images
- Code-switching
- Determining importance (making deductions)
- Paraphrasing and summarising
- Connecting
- Comparing and contrasting
- Inferring
- Synthesising
- Self-monitoring and self-correction

### *Predicting*

Predicting helps students to activate their prior knowledge of a context or topic, allowing them to combine what they know with the new information. Predictions will be based on a student's familiarity with the topic and the context, and how familiar they are with the speaker or audience. Encourage students to make personal predictions before and during speaking and listening. For example, a speaker has to predict the type of spoken text that will be appropriate to a particular purpose, audience and situation. During listening, effective listeners adjust and refine their initial predictions about a speaker's message as they receive information and make new connections.

### *Self-talk*

Effective speakers and listeners continually use self-talk as a part of their thinking process. Self-talk is the running commentary that goes on inside our heads, usually without any verbalisation. Self-talk is how we make sense of our thinking and reflect on our actions. Self-questioning is part of self-talk; the two strategies usually operate together. Using Think-alouds to verbalise this strategy helps to build students' understanding of the strong links between thinking and actions. By giving voice to their thoughts, teachers are providing students with a specific structure for reflective practice (Wilson 1999).

### *Self-questioning*

Effective speakers and listeners continually think and ask a wide range of questions before, during and after speaking and listening; they use these questions to help them comprehend and make meaning. Often these questions are spontaneous and natural, with one question leading to the next. Questions can relate to content, style, text form, important messages, events, actions and inferences. They can also relate to predictions, the speaker's intent or attempts to clarify meaning. Making students aware of how to use




© Department of Education WA 2013

self-questioning is vital to developing their ability to understand and make meaning in their learning. Self-questioning is how we clarify our understanding, examine new concepts, reason, analyse and hypothesise.

Helping students to become aware of questions they ask is an important goal for teaching this strategy. Emphasise that asking questions helps students to develop a deeper understanding of what they are talking about (or what they are listening to).

### *Visualising and Creating Images*

Effective speakers and listeners use all of their senses to continually create mental images. Creating mental images promotes the use of prior knowledge. It improves the ability to make predictions, draw inferences, interpret information, remember details, and assist with overall comprehension and memory. Images can be visual, auditory, olfactory, kinesthetic or emotional.

It is important to give students the opportunity to share their images and to talk about how creating images helps them to gain a better understanding. Images can be shared orally, through drama, or as drawings or jottings.

### *Code-switching*

Code-switching is the term used to describe the process a speaker uses to alternate between one or more languages (or dialects, in the case of ESL or ESD speakers). It is often assumed that code-switching refers only to second language users, but code-switching occurs in every language. (Code-switching within a language is also referred to as style shifting.) Most of us are conversational code-switchers in our first language. In most people's lives, code-switching is a necessity; we use different forms of expression depending on who we are speaking to and where we are speaking to them. For instance, a young adult would not use the same words or phrases when speaking to their friends in an informal atmosphere as they would when speaking to a superior, e.g. an elder, teacher, advisor or supervisor.

All students should be made aware of how we code-switch to suit a particular situational or social context in Standard Australian English, especially ESL and ESD students. The development of this strategy will enable students to be competent users of Standard Australian English in a variety of contexts; a skill essential for success in the wider community or workforce.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Determining Importance*

Determining importance in speaking and listening includes selecting the appropriate content, text form and conventions to suit the intended purpose and audience. It includes selecting which information to retain in short- or long-term memory, and which information to respond to. Students in the early phases of development have a limited ability to determine importance and often include irrelevant details, e.g. including too much detail when retelling an event: 'He said, then she said, then I said ...'.

### *Paraphrasing and Summarising*

As developing speakers and listeners assume greater control of the 'determining importance' strategy, they become more able to paraphrase and summarise. Paraphrasing is the strategy speakers and listeners use to restate a spoken text in a way that retains the sense of meaning and provides clarification for understanding. Paraphrasing requires a speaker or listener to restate the essence of the original text in a more concise form. Summarising is important, as it helps the listener to be aware of what they are being told. The Determining Importance strategy allows students to paraphrase and summarise; they can also use predicting and synthesising strategies. There are many strategies that underpin paraphrasing and summarising, making it a complex strategy to learn. However, the massive volume of spoken texts that students are exposed to – and the growing range of modes and formats – make this strategy an essential part of speaking and listening.

### *Connecting*

Effective speakers and listeners will talk about, listen to and respond to topics they know and care about. This allows them to make strong connections between their prior knowledge and the information they speak about and listen to. The meaning that students obtain from any oral communication is intertwined with the meaning they brought to it. Activating students' prior knowledge before speaking and listening allows them to consider what they already know about the content, form, format and conventions to be used. Drawing on the work of Keene and Zimmerman (1997), connections can be defined as follows:

- *Text-to-self connections* involve students thinking about their own life and connecting their own personal experiences to new information. Text-to-self connections are often emotionally based, making an emotional connection to something that will help us to remember. Emotions determine attention and help to create meaning (Eric Jensen 1995).




© Department of Education WA 2013

- *Text-to-text connections* involve students thinking about oral texts they have previously composed or understood. They might make connections to other themes, styles, organisations, structures, characters or content.
- *Text-to-world connections* involve students thinking about what they know about the world outside their personal experience, their family and their community. These connections are often bigger 'idea' connections and link students' understandings to something in the broader world (Zimmerman & Hutchins 2003).

It is important to help students refine and limit their connections to those that help them to understand and make meaning. Modelling connections to students and discussing them helps students learn how making relevant connections leads to understanding.

### *Comparing and Contrasting*

Making comparisons relates closely to, and is an extension of, the connecting strategy. As students make connections to their prior knowledge, they also begin to make comparisons with the information they are receiving.

When students make comparisons, they begin by asking questions, e.g. How is this information different to what I have heard before? How is it different from what I already believe about this issue? Why is their opinion different to mine? Being able to recognise and describe the similarities and differences between ideas is a critical skill for students to learn.

### *Inferring*

Making inferences is a strategy used by effective speakers and listeners as they take meaning from spoken texts, then add their own ideas to make inferences. During the process of inferring, students make predictions, draw conclusions and make judgements to create their own interpretations. Making inferences allows students to move beyond the literal text and to make assumptions about matters that were not actually stated. Inferences can be made by using acoustic, vocal or lexical information within the text to guess the meaning of unfamiliar language items, or to fill in missing information, e.g. a student may be able to infer the meaning of spoken text by the tone and volume of the speaker's voice.

### *Synthesising*

When composing and comprehending text, effective speakers and listeners use synthesising to piece together information from a variety of sources, much like putting a jigsaw together. As students




© Department of Education WA 2013

speak and listen, they continually reflect on what they have just said or just heard. This enables them to keep track of their thinking and to maintain meaning.

Students who consciously use this strategy are able to continually monitor their understanding, allowing them to pull together or retell information that they have heard. During the process of synthesis, students may be connecting, comparing, determining importance, posing questions and creating images, e.g. a student may retell what they have heard as a way of synthesising information.

### *Self-monitoring and Self-correction*

Effective speakers and listeners continually reflect on what they are saying and hearing to confirm their understanding. If understanding breaks down for the speaker or the listener, they use repair strategies to retain or clarify meaning, e.g. repeating, re-casting, paraphrasing, summarising and asking questions. The ability to monitor our own understanding, and to be able to make the appropriate corrections if understanding is not present, is quite complex and relies on the effective use of the strategies previously discussed.

Helping students to consider and record the strategies they use in their speaking and listening helps to develop their ability to self-monitor and self-correct. The Talk Diary shown in Figure 4.1 provides a framework that could be used.

| Context of Speaking Event (Situation, Audience, Purpose) | Strategies Used | Reason For Use | Effectiveness |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

**Figure 4.1 Talk Diary**

## What Are the Speaking and Listening Processes?

Speaking and listening processes are the *how* of speaking and listening, and depend on the context of the speaking or listening situation, e.g. informal or formal. Students may not go through all of the stages or use a predictable path. Speakers and listeners often move back and forth between the stages, making the process fluid and dynamic.




© Department of Education WA 2013

The processes, as shown in Figure 4.2, are:

- planning and preparing
- managing
- reflecting and reviewing
- goal setting.

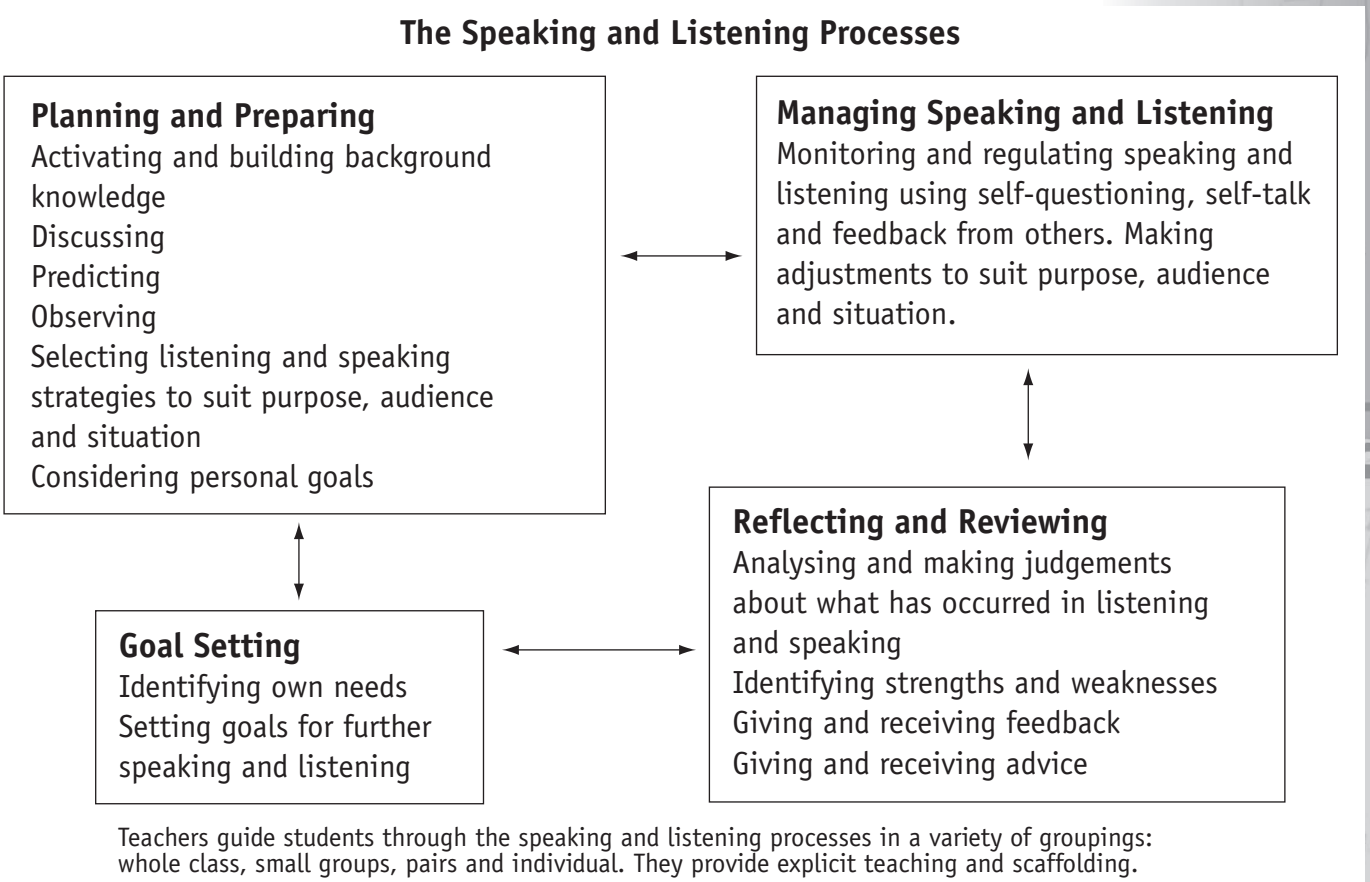



**Figure 4.2**

## Teaching the Speaking and Listening Processes and Strategies

At all phases of development, the processes of speaking and listening and the strategies used are best introduced through a sequential and repeated use of six effective teaching practices: familiarising, analysing, modelling, sharing, guiding and applying.

Figure 4.3 is based on the 'Gradual Release of Responsibility' model originally presented by Pearson and Gallagher (1983). Teachers can use this framework to help them effectively introduce speaking and listening processes and strategies. The framework involves moving




© Department of Education WA 2013

students from a supportive context where there is a high degree of teacher control (modelling), to a more independent context where the student has the greater control (independent application). The long-term goal is for students to select and use speaking and listening processes and strategies flexibly and independently across a range of different contexts.

Teachers can help students to achieve this goal by giving them opportunities to:

- actively attend to a variety of strategy demonstrations
- hear the thinking behind the use of each strategy
- contribute ideas in whole-group situations about the use of strategies
- work with others to practise the strategies
- receive feedback and support for the use of strategies from the teacher and their peers
- independently apply the strategies across a range of different spoken texts
- apply the strategies in authentic situations in school and community contexts.

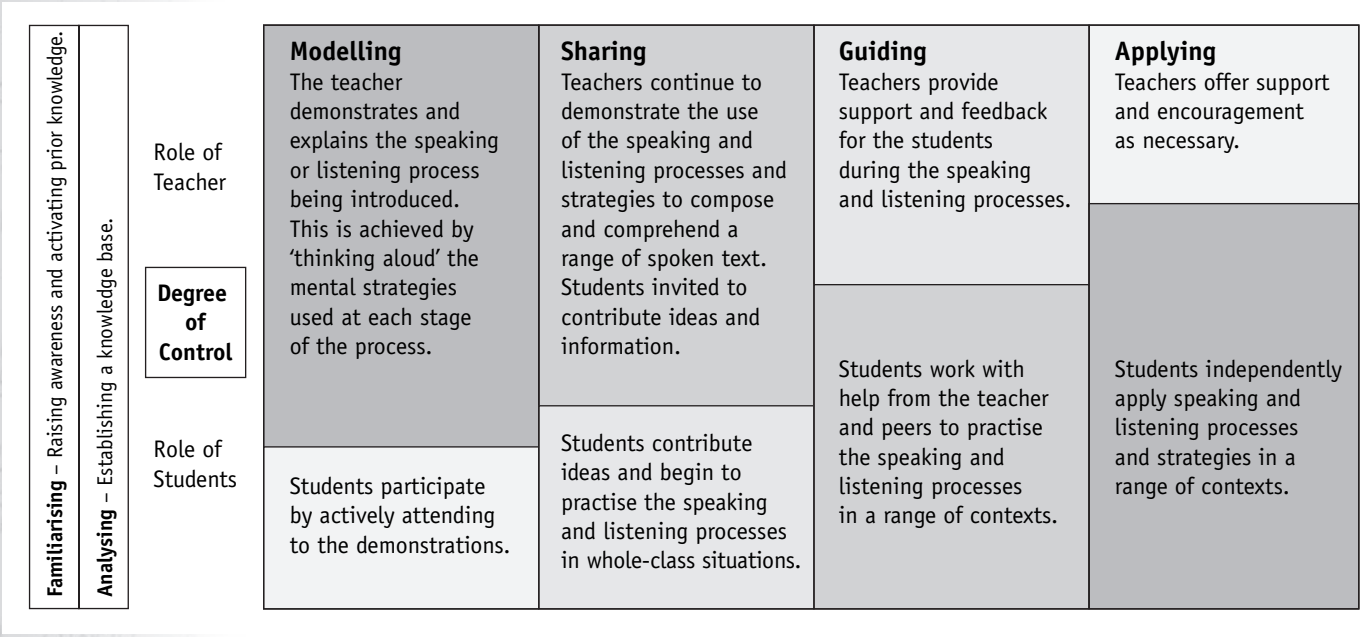



**Figure 4.3 Gradual Release of Responsibility Model**

## Familiarising

Familiarising is often referred to as immersing or exposure; it describes how teachers raise students' awareness and activate their prior knowledge. Familiarising involves students listening to specific subject matter, followed by discussion to activate students' prior




© Department of Education WA 2013

knowledge of the subject. Familiarising is not a passive teaching and learning practice. Speaking and listening are active socio-cultural behaviours, and any familiarising activity should have students actively involved in discussion.

## Analysing

Analysing involves students in problem solving, evaluating and classifying, as they investigate the parts to understand the whole and how each part works. Investigating can involve students in researching speaking and listening situations, e.g. how speech varies in particular contexts; how vocabulary varies; the social conventions and degree of formality used. Students' research could be represented or captured in some way, e.g. recorded on a chart, journal entry.

## Modelling

Modelling is the most significant step in explicitly teaching any learning process or strategy. Conducting regular, short sessions (or mini-lessons) that involve modelling and thinking aloud will show the effective use of a particular strategy.

Using modelling to introduce processes and strategies allows teachers to articulate what is happening inside their heads, making the strategies used throughout the process evident. This 'thinking aloud' is a vital part of the modelling process. Modelling sessions need to be well planned and thought out. It is more effective to think through what needs to be modelled than to model spontaneously. Consider the following questions before modelling for students, to ensure that the sessions are effective and targeted to students' needs.

### *Planning Modelling Sessions*

- How do I use this strategy in my own speaking and listening?
- How does using this strategy make my speaking and listening more effective or efficient?
- What language can I use to best describe what I am doing and thinking?

### *Delivering Modelling Sessions*

To model speaking and listening strategies effectively, they need to be embedded in authentic learning interactions. This makes them highly purposeful and immediately applicable. For a modelling session to be effective the following steps need to be covered:

- An explanation of *what* the strategy includes.
- An explanation of *why* the strategy is important.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Modelling *how* to perform the strategy in a context that is currently meaningful to the context of the class.
- Explanation and modelling of *when* to use this strategy in other situations both in the school and wider community contexts. (Wilhelm 2001)

## Sharing

Sharing sessions give students and teachers opportunities to think and construct knowledge together. Sharing allows the teacher to continue to demonstrate the use of the selected strategy. The major difference between modelling and sharing sessions is that students are now contributing ideas and information.

'Thinking aloud' during sharing sessions allows the teacher to demonstrate the selected strategies and allows students to have a go at using them. Inviting different students to share their thinking will allow others to hear a range of ideas and help them to build their own knowledge of how a specific strategy can be used.

Use ongoing sharing sessions to work collaboratively with students to construct and comprehend a variety of speech acts.

### *Planning Sharing Sessions*

Consider these questions before sharing sessions, to provide a focus for the session:

- What aspects of the strategy do I need to demonstrate further?
- What type of context might be the most appropriate to reinforce this strategy?
- At what stage of the speaking or listening process is this strategy most appropriate?
- What language associated with the strategy do I want to review?
- What is the best way to involve students in contributing to this demonstration?
- How will I ensure that the students reflect on the effectiveness of using this strategy?

## Guiding

Guiding sessions allow students to use a specific strategy in authentic contexts, with a variety of speech acts. Guiding sessions involve scaffolding students as they use the strategy in the speaking and listening processes. Give students ongoing feedback, providing support as they move towards using the strategy independently in their own speaking and listening.


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

### *Planning Guiding Sessions*

Consider the following questions before students engage in any guided learning, to ensure that the sessions are deliberate and effective:

- Which strategy do my students need to practise? At what stage of the speaking or listening process do they need to be doing this?
- Have I provided sharing sessions where we have discussed and used the strategy?
- What text type would be most appropriate to use when practising this strategy?
- What grouping arrangements will be most suitable for the students?
- How will I provide feedback to students during these sessions?
- How will I provide the opportunity for students to reflect on and share their learning?

## Applying

It is essential that students have opportunities to work independently and apply the speaking and listening strategies before, during and after speaking and listening. To do this successfully, students need to apply these strategies in a wide range of authentic contexts, both in the school and in the wider community.

To encourage students to use their speaking and listening skills in the wider community, it is vital that teachers continually talk about, demonstrate and reflect on the application of these strategies in all learning areas, as well as in wider community settings.

It would be wrong to assume that students can learn these strategies in isolation and out of context; they can't. Teaching speaking and listening strategies in isolation will only give students a limited surface understanding; they will lack the skills to apply their knowledge to contexts beyond the classroom. The teaching of strategies needs to be embedded in the speaking and listening process, and students need to be aware of how to effectively use the strategies in different situations, for different purposes and audiences.

It is essential that teachers and students have a clear understanding of the speaking and listening processes, an understanding of how they work together, and an understanding of the elements that are significant to both.

Students need to be able to effectively plan, monitor and reflect on their speaking and listening so that they can communicate




© Department of Education WA 2013

successfully in a variety of contexts. By explicitly demonstrating what these strategies are, and how they are used in speaking and listening, teachers are able to develop students' ability to think about their thinking (metacognitive awareness) while they are speaking and listening.

## Developing Metacognitive Awareness

Making students aware of their thinking is an essential component of teaching them to be competent communicators. Metacognition is a student's ability to analyse and reflect on their own learning; it is often referred to as the ability to 'think about one's thinking'. Meadows (1993) defines metacognition as the ability to reflect upon and talk about one's strengths, needs and capabilities. It usually involves paying attention to what you're thinking, and using strategies to think more effectively; it is a key strategy in improving critical and creative thinking.

Metacognition is about being able to take control of your learning; it includes self-reflection, self-responsibility and initiative, as well as goal setting and time management. Teachers need to clearly articulate and demonstrate how they make use of these strategies in their own speaking and listening. They can do this by using teachable moments, think-alouds and mini-lessons. They can also use scaffolded learning, and modelled, guided, shared and independent practice in a range of different speaking situations. It is important to develop the metacognitive capabilities of all learners, regardless of their socio-cultural or situational backgrounds.

Metacognition consists of four basic stages:
- Activating existing knowledge.
- Developing a plan of action.
- Maintaining and monitoring the plan.
- Evaluating the plan.

Metacognition is embedded in the process of a student's learning. The stages of this process are exactly the same as the stages of speaking and listening; they are intrinsically linked, as shown in Figure 4.2.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Speaking Process: Overview

Speaking underpins all learning and is the foundation for thinking. Students speak to:

- satisfy needs and wants (*Instrumental*)
- interact socially (*Interactional*)
- persuade and control others (*Regulatory*)
- explore ideas (*Imaginative*)
- report and inform (*Representational*)
- formulate and confirm thoughts (*Heuristic*).

The speaking process includes three distinct stages: before speaking, during speaking and after speaking. In familiar speaking situations, speakers will go through theses stages automatically, but in less familiar (or unknown) situations, speakers need to consciously control the strategies that they use. It is important to provide students with the understandings and appropriate scaffolds for each stage of this process.

## Supporting Students' Understanding of the Speaking Process

Each stage of the speaking process has distinct components.

**Before speaking** The speaker decides what they are going to say, how they will say it and who will be listening.

**During speaking** The speaker has to consider various factors, e.g. being understood, tone of voice, using suitable vocabulary, non-verbal actions, managing listeners' reactions and responses, being able to recognise and repair any misunderstandings or communication breakdown.

**After speaking** The speaker might have to answer questions, clarify ideas, make adjustments, repair misunderstandings and explain any concepts not understood. They end by reviewing the process to clarify and confirm their own understanding.

Because most of the speaking we do is immediate and spontaneous, this process is usually automatic in all except formal planned situations, where speech is deliberately constructed for different communicative effects. However, most communication breakdowns or misunderstandings occur because one or more of the stages (before, during or after) was not effectively planned or delivered. The same applies to the process of listening.

Providing opportunities for students to use and reflect on the speaking process in a range of situations can greatly improve their ability to successfully communicate in a variety of contexts.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Speaking Process: Planning and Preparing

In the writing process, engaging the students and analysing the task takes place before any drafting or actual writing. It's the same with speaking. All the planning, gathering and organising ideas for speaking begins before students actually speak. In familiar situations this will be instantaneous, e.g. talking to a friend or parent. But in situations that are less familiar, more formal, or with a less familiar audience, teachers will have to spend more time in familiarising and engaging the students.

Students' prior experiences and socio-cultural backgrounds (both inside and outside the classroom) will impact on what they say and how they say it. Pre-speaking activities involve familiarising students with the context, analysing the demands of the task and providing opportunities for students to plan and organise for speaking.

Students need to be provided with opportunities to explore and engage in a wide variety of different speaking situations; this allows the teacher to establish or activate students' existing background knowledge before they plan their speaking.

All students face a series of decisions before they speak. These decisions will be automatic when the situation is familiar, but carefully planned when the situation is unfamiliar. Effective speakers do not always use formal pre-speaking activities to plan prior to speaking. This is particularly true of spontaneous speech. However, more formal speaking and unfamiliar spoken texts often involve some level of planning and thinking before speaking. Students can plan for their speaking in a wide range of ways. This might include simple techniques, e.g. drawing pictures, talking with someone or writing down thoughts, and more complex techniques, e.g. creating word webs, mind maps or making journal entries.

## Effective Speakers Know How to Prepare and Plan

Effective speakers are able to make choices about how to plan, depending on the purpose, audience and context for their speaking. Effective speakers are able to do the following:

- Engage with the learning by discussing their thinking with others.
- Determine their own purpose for speaking.


© Department of Education WA 2013

- Select a topic and text form suitable to the audience, purpose and context.
- Generate ideas for speaking.
- Build background knowledge.
- Gather and record thoughts and ideas, e.g. notes and drawings.
- Use different techniques to organise ideas, e.g. thinking-aloud, brainstorming, drawing, listing, using graphic organisers.
- Consider if formal planning structures and props are needed for formal planned speeches, e.g. notes, palm cards, PowerPoint displays.

## Supporting Speakers to Plan

Speaking is a process as well as a product. Much of a student's speech occurs in unplanned, informal situations where a structured planning process for all spoken interactions would be inappropriate. This dynamic and interactive speaking needs to be promoted through inquiry and the exchange of ideas; teachers should help students to become aware of the way language works in a wide range of social interactions.

However, students need to be exposed to a range of techniques for use with unfamiliar text forms, new or demanding contexts and formal speech. Teachers should use a combination of demonstrations, think-alouds and mini-lessons, as well as providing opportunities for students to practise using these techniques in planning for authentic speaking situations.

The aim is for all students to be able to select from a large repertoire of techniques to suit the specific needs of each speaking situation. The planning techniques listed in Figure 4.4 will help students to make informed choices about how to plan when they are composing texts independently. The intention is that this planning will become automatic for most students in all but the most formal or least familiar speaking situations.




© Department of Education WA 2013

**Activities That Support Speakers to Plan**

| Essential learning | Learning Experiences |
|---|---|
| 1. Sharing personal experiences | – Think, Pair, Share |
| 2. Determining the purpose for speaking | – Pre-speaking Reflective Questions<br>– Before We Begin<br>– What's Relevant? |
| 3. Generating ideas for speaking | – Brainstorming<br>– DOVE Brainstorming<br>– Dialogue Journal |
| 4. Establishing a knowledge base | – Communication Detectives<br>– Speech Pyramid<br>– SPEAKING Model |
| 5. Considering point of view | – What's My Point of View? |
| 6. Organising and recording information | – Graphic Organisers<br>– Making Notes |
| 7. Planning for formal talks | – General Information<br>– Planning Frameworks<br>– Using Information Technology<br>– Using Visual Aids<br>– Using Anecdotes<br>– Using Rehearsal |

**Figure 4.4**

## 1 Sharing Personal Experiences

Providing students with an opportunity to talk in pairs or small groups, to share understandings, questions and thoughts about the topic or concept to be discussed gives them a chance to activate existing knowledge. They are able to connect the new information to the known in a supportive environment rather than a threatening one. Developing a shared knowledge leads to understanding and engagement with the learning. Being able to discuss your thinking with others is an essential skill for students from all phases of development. These discussions will be much more powerful if they occur in the context of an existing learning programme, rather than being contrived one-off activities.

### *Think, Pair, Share*

Think, Pair, Share is a technique that gives students a chance to analyse and engage with their learning in a non-threatening way.


FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

Students learn from one another and get to try out their ideas before making them public. The benefits of this technique are increased time on-task and higher-quality contributions to class discussions. The four stages to Think, Pair, Share are as follows:

1 The teacher poses a question, or suggests an issue or idea to be discussed.
2 Students think individually for a set amount of time.
3 Each student discusses their thinking with a fellow student. Together, each pair of students can reach a shared understanding. The process can be extended to four students (Think, Quad, Share) who further refine their thoughts before sharing with the whole class. These small-group settings are less threatening to individual students and promote increased conversation and shared thinking.
4 Students share their thinking with the whole class. Students present their thinking individually or cooperatively to the class as a whole group.

Think, Pair, Share helps students develop a conceptual understanding of a topic, allowing them to select information, draw conclusions and consider other points of view.

## 2 Determining the Purpose for Speaking

Before speaking, allow students to determine the purpose, audience, topic and situation for speaking. This will allow students to build on existing knowledge to formulate a plan. This sort of reflection could be done individually, in groups or as a whole class, using a similar reflective framework to that shown in Figure 4.5.

**Pre-speaking Reflective Questions**

**What** are you going to talk about? *What is the topic?* (Field)
**Why** are you going to talk about it? *What is the purpose?*
**Who** will you be talking to? *Who is the audience?* (Tenor)
**How** will you be delivering your message? *What is the text form?* (Mode)

**Figure 4.5**

### *Before We Begin*

This planning technique requires students to consider purpose, audience, text form, specific vocabulary and context prior to speaking.

- Have students consider the purpose, audience, form and topic of their speaking, and record or note this. Figure 4.6 shows a sample framework that could be used.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Allow time for students to record specific ideas and vocabulary they could use.
- Encourage students to note the steps in the text form that they will be using.
- Remind students that their ideas and outline can be changed and adapted as they compose their texts.

| | |
|---|---|
| Topic: _____<br>Purpose: _____<br>Audience: _____<br>Form: _____ | |
| Ideas | Outline |
| Vocabulary | |

**Figure 4.6 Before We Begin**

### *What's Relevant?*

This technique helps students determine what information to include in a text and what to leave out. It can be used with any text forms, although it will be necessary to provide directions or instructions for younger students. This technique gives students the opportunity to consider and record the most relevant and irrelevant information prior to speaking.

- Give students time to consider the demands of the speaking situation. They can brainstorm in pairs or small groups.
- Students could use a reflection format, as shown in Figure 4.5.
- Students consider each idea for its level of importance, then record each idea in the 'relevant' or the 'irrelevant' column.
- Encourage students to refer to their What's Relevant? format when constructing and delivering their spoken text.
- The What's Relevant format, as shown in Figure 4.7, can also be used as a reflective framework to assess the effectiveness of a message.




© Department of Education WA 2013

**What's Relevant?**

| Purpose | Audience |
|---|---|
| Important | Not Important |

**Figure 4.7**

## 3 Generating Ideas for Speaking

### *Brainstorming*

Brainstorming is a technique for activating students' prior knowledge and generating new ideas. When brainstorming, students are given a limited time to record all they known about a topic. All ideas should be accepted and recorded immediately they come to mind. There are no right or wrong ideas when brainstorming. Brainstorming can be used with the whole class, small groups or on an individual basis.

The basic rules for brainstorming are as follows:
- All ideas are accepted.
- Suspend judgement of ideas; no-one should be asked to explain, defend or clarify their contributions.
- Record all ideas.
- Encourage thinking 'outside the box'.
- Encourage students to 'piggyback' by building on other students' ideas.
- Emphasise quality of ideas rather than quantity.

Brainstorming provides opportunities for students to:
- share their thinking and expand their existing knowledge by building on others' ideas.
- examine a topic, question or idea in depth.
- accept and respect individual differences.
- take risks in sharing their thinking.
- synthesise and order their ideas.
- be introduced to the idea of collecting data before engaging with learning.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *DOVE Brainstorming*

After identifying and clarifying a particular problem or task, students can use the DOVE framework to direct their brainstorming (Bellanca 1990, cited Bennet 1991). DOVE is an acronym for Defer, Opt, Vast, Expand, as detailed in Figure 4.8.

**DOVE Brainstorming**

**D**efer judgement: accept all ideas, list everything, evaluate later.
**O**pt for original and out of the box; anything goes, especially different and crazy ideas.
**V**ast numbers of quality ideas are best, the more the better.
**E**xpand by association; encourage students to 'piggyback' off each other's ideas.

**Figure 4.8 Outline for DOVE Brainstorming**

### *Dialogue Journal*

A dialogue journal is a notebook or journal in which students record their thoughts, feelings, responses, sketches, observations, conversations, opinions and interesting ideas. The journal is an ongoing planning document, and can be used as a stimulus for students' speaking activities.

- Discuss the purpose of a dialogue journal, and the types of entries that can be made.
- Provide opportunities for students to investigate different types of spoken text, e.g. take note of the kinds of speech acts they hear around them.
- Provide time for students to share what they have noticed.
- Encourage students to write in their journals on an ongoing basis.
- Invite students to share their recordings at regular intervals.

## 4 Establishing a Knowledge Base

Give students sufficient time and opportunities to build a range of knowledge and skills they can draw on to compose, construct and comprehend spoken text. Students need to know how their knowledge, experiences and perspectives influence their speaking and listening choices.

### *Communication Detectives*

Communication Detectives is a planning technique where students investigate and analyse a specific communication context (adapted from Haig, Oliver and Rocheouste 2005). They can work




© Department of Education WA 2013

individually, in pairs or in small groups to research speaking and listening in the school and wider community. Encourage students to record their observations and present them to the class.

- Decide on an area of focus. This might be related to a local event, an identified need or taken from a list of communication settings developed with the students. Establish the following:
  - What is being talked about? (The topic)
  - Why is it being talked about? (The purpose)
  - Who is doing the talking?
  - Who is listening?
  - What is the text form?
- Support students as they carry out their research. This might involve going on an excursion or including some home-learning observations. Parent support might be needed.
- Provide time for students to plan the way in which they will present their findings. Will they present to the whole class or a small group?
- Support students as they discuss, compare and sort their findings. Record any summary statements.
- Encourage students to reflect on and discuss what they have found out.

(For further detail about 'Communication Detectives', see the Use of Text section on pages 20–23 and 104–107.)

### *Speech Pyramid*

The speech pyramid (Oliver et al 2005) is a graphic organiser that is used to record observations about the range of speech that occurs in speech situations. With appropriate support, speech pyramids can be used at all phases of development.

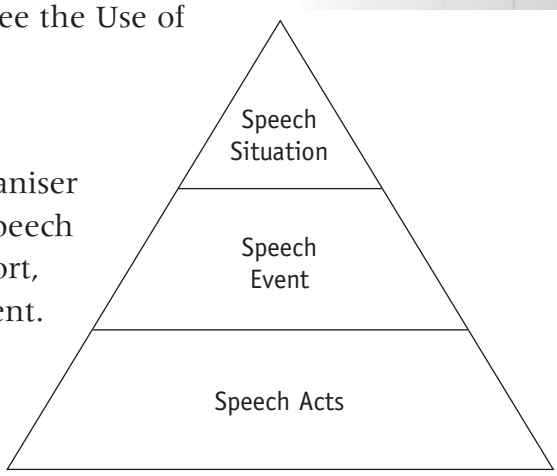



**Figure 4.9 Speech Pyramid**

### *SPEAKING*

Sociolinguist Dell Hymes developed a model to promote the analysis of speech events and speech acts within a cultural context. SPEAKING is an acronym based on the first letter of each component of the model, as shown in Figure 4.10. SPEAKING provides a powerful tool for analysing many different kinds of speaking situations (Hymes 1974).




© Department of Education WA 2013

| Context | Speech Act |
|---|---|
| **Setting the Scene**<br>This refers to the speech situation, i.e. the time, place and general physical circumstance. The situation is embedded in a cultural context. | |
| **Participants**<br>Speaker and Audience: distinctions can be made within these categories, e.g. the audience can be distinguished as speakers or listeners. | |
| **Ends**<br>Purpose of speech events. | |
| **Act Sequence**<br>Form and order of the interaction that make up the speech acts. | |
| **Key**<br>Cues that establish the tone, manner or spirit of the speech acts. | |
| **Instrumentalities**<br>Forms and styles of speech. | |
| **Norms**<br>Use of conventions. | |
| **Genre**<br>The kind of speech act or event; the kind of story. | |

**Figure 4.10 Hymes' SPEAKING Mnemonic.**

## 5 Considering Point of View

Students are required to work and interact collaboratively in a wide number of situations, e.g. in the classroom, with the family, in sporting teams and workplaces. Being able to state their point of view in a positive way that will be accepted (rather than rejected), will enable students to combine their way of thinking with the thinking of others in the group, and arrive at new insights. The old saying applies here: 'It's not what you say but the way that you say it'.

It means having the ability to put your ideas forward. Students need to be able to balance fact with opinion. When we put forward a point of view or a personal opinion, 'we lay out our reasoning and thinking and invite others to challenge us. "Here is my view, and here is how I arrive at it", "How does it sound to you?", "What makes sense to you and what doesn't?"' (Senge 1994).

Students need to understand that what a speaker says might be influenced by their personal views and opinions. Teachers need to provide a supportive environment in which students can express their views, but also learn that others may have ideas that significantly differ from their own.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *What's My Point of View?*

Inviting students to discuss events from different points of view stimulates their ability to make inferences and judgements, deepening their understanding of actions and behaviours. Retelling a story or event or presenting information from different perspectives allows students to understand how different people can see the same thing in different ways.

## 6 Organising and Recording Information

### *Graphic Organisers*

Graphic organisers, concept maps, semantic webs and mind maps are visual representations of information. They are useful planning techniques that help students identify key information and interrelationships between ideas. Concept mapping is suitable for students in all phases, and can be used across all curriculum areas. These maps are useful for activating and retrieving prior knowledge related to the topic being studied. Students need to be introduced to a wide range of graphic organisers; this allows them to select the most appropriate way to record information for a particular speaking purpose. The following list contains the most effective graphic organisers:

- Mapping
- Venn diagrams
- Tree diagrams

Graphic organisers are a useful planning tool; they can also be used for reflection, as they allow students to consolidate, revise and assess their learning.

**Mapping**

Concept maps are one way to record in a diagram what a learner is thinking about. They are also known as mind maps, semantic webs, cycle maps or spider maps. Concept maps allow students to organise and show their thinking. Students can be taught to use concept maps at all phases of development and across learning areas.

Mapping uses strong single words and meaningful phrases to help students focus clearly on the idea being developed.

- Have students write in the middle of their page the word, phrase or symbol that represents the idea they are writing about, then draw a circle around it. The circle forms the centre of their map.
- Students then write single words or phrases (or draw pictures) that relate to the concept in the circle. The new ideas should be written around the outside of the circle, using different colours to represent different ideas.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Direct students to draw lines to show the links between different ideas. This will help students see how one part affects another.
- Have students reflect on their map and decide if they have grouped things together correctly; have them make any necessary changes.
- Have students number the order in which they use these ideas in their speaking.
- Allow time for students to use their map to compose and reflect on their speaking.

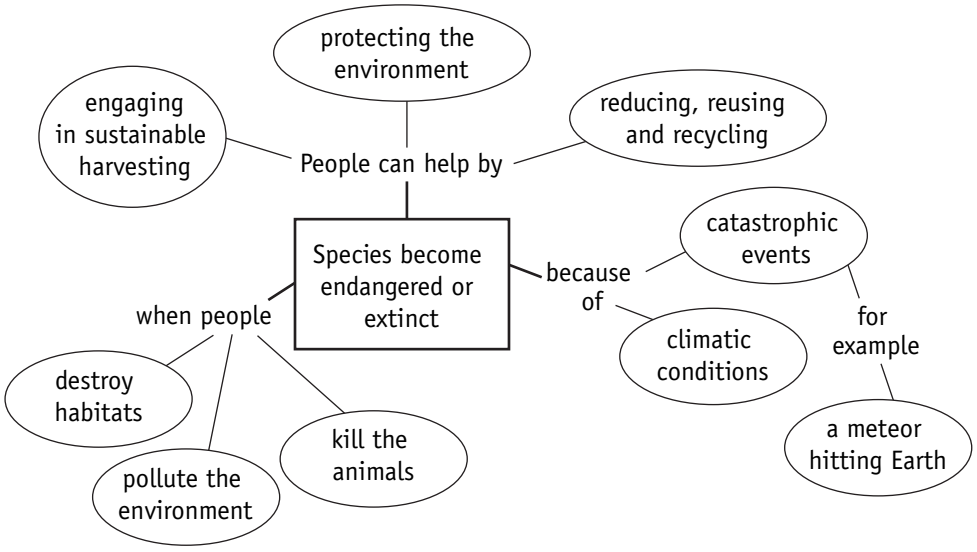



**Figure 4.11 A Concept Map**

## Venn Diagrams

Venn diagrams consist of two or more overlapping circles. They can be used as a planning technique to compare two or more pieces of information on the same topic. Considering the similarities and differences of an element helps students to choose how to represent that element in their speaking or thinking.

- Have students identify what they want to consider, e.g. two reports about the same news item.
- Have students consider the two items for comparison, e.g. similar use of vocabulary, similar delivery of vocabulary.
- Ask students to identify what the two items have in common, then record the common elements in the intersecting oval.
- Students then identify the differences between the items and record these in the outer portions of the circles.
- Complete the process for further elements of the text, e.g. use of non-verbal gestures.
- Encourage students to use the completed Venn diagram to make choices about how they could compose a similar text.




© Department of Education WA 2013

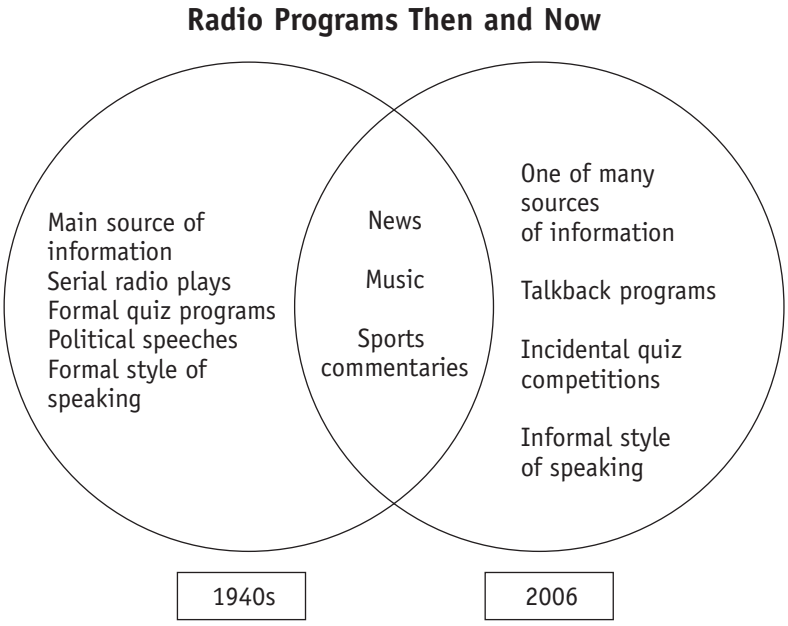



**Figure 4.12 Venn Diagram Comparing Radio Programs**

## Tree Diagrams

Tree diagrams are used to record information that might be included in a text and show how this information could be linked. Tree diagrams start with a focal point, e.g. the main idea, a point of view, an argument. Lesser (or subordinate) information then branches out from this point.

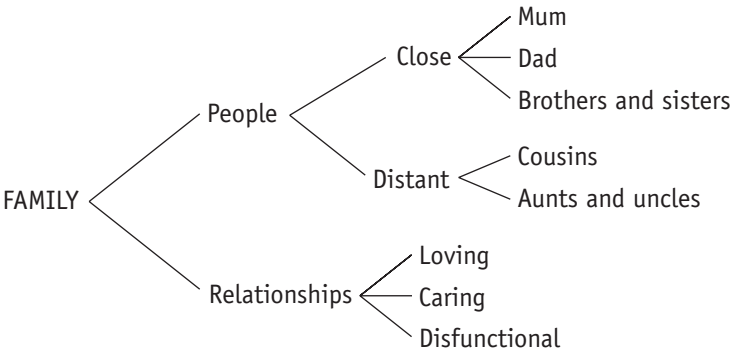



**Figure 4.13 Example of a Tree Diagram**

- Have students determine a focus for their speaking. This should be recorded as a focal point of the tree diagram, e.g. families.
- Students then need to consider some subheadings about the topic, e.g. relationships, people, family members.
- Have students brainstorm their completed their sub-topics with additional detail, e.g. close, distant; loving, caring; estranged.
- Have students use their tree diagrams as the framework for planning and reflecting on their speaking.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Making Notes*

It is critical that students understand the purpose of note-taking and note-making. Taking and making notes improves students' recall of important information, increases their ability to link new material with prior knowledge, and can refocus their attention.

Note-taking is recording key information. It serves a number of purposes including expanding knowledge of a topic and organising and summarising information for future reference or use in another task. Notes should be complete, concise and easy to understand at a later date.

Note-making is responding to a text by making notes, comments or questions. It promotes critical thinking as students connect the new information with their prior knowledge.

To take effective notes, students benefit from:

- having a clear purpose for note-taking. The first step in any note-taking should be being clear about the information that you want or need to collect
- selecting or creating appropriate note-taking formats
- creating a note-taking plan and personal shortcuts
- creating appropriate headings and subheadings
- identifying key information, and recording key words or phrases
- identifying the main ideas and the supporting details
- synthesising information from various sources
- summarising and paraphrasing.

Students also benefit from knowing how to use a variety of methods for recording information in note form. Teachers should look for frameworks that support students' note-taking, as shown in Figure 4.14.

**Guide to Note-taking Frameworks**

| | |
|---|---|
| Frameworks for itemising or describing objects or ideas | • List • Y-Chart<br>• Explosion Chart |
| Frameworks for supporting problem and solution or causation activities | • T-Chart<br>• Text Map |
| Frameworks for comparing ideas or objects | • Retrieval Chart<br>• Tree Diagram<br>• Venn Diagram |
| Frameworks for representing hierarchical order | • Timeline • Flow Chart<br>• Pyramid |
| Frameworks for retrieving main idea and supporting details | • Structured overviews |

**Figure 4.14**




© Department of Education WA 2013

## 7 Planning for Formal Talks

All students participate in language activities that require engaging with and presenting to their class or to a wider school audience. These activities will make some students feel very uncomfortable and unsure of themselves. Provide support by helping students to analyse and explore the demands of a particular situation, then helping them plan for those demands.

The processes and strategies used in a Year 1 interest talk will be similar to those used by Year 12 students in a formal debate, but the demands placed upon them are different. Students need to know that several elements need to be considered in preparing for any spoken presentation:

- Determining the purpose of the presentation.
- Deciding on the message the audience will remember.
- Choosing *how* to present the information.
- Brainstorming and researching.
- Forming the ideas into a plan.
- Anticipating audience questions.
- Choosing appropriate vocabulary and determining how the words are going to be said.
- Determining if any visual aids or notes will be needed.

### *Planning Frameworks*

Support students to consider these factors when planning and preparing for their presentation by allowing them to share ideas and to use a selection of graphic organisers and reflection sheets. Two suggestions for organisational frameworks are shown in Figures

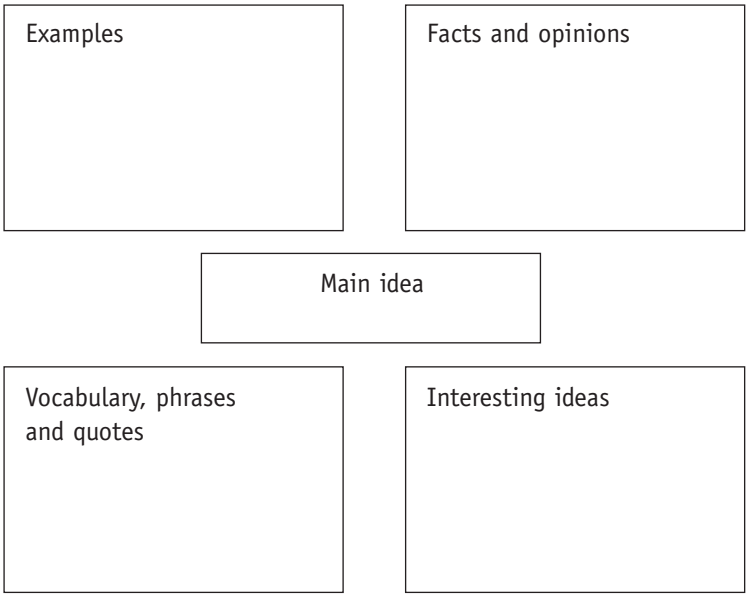



**Figure 4.15 Brainstorm Framework**




© Department of Education WA 2013

4.15 and 4.16; teachers should make their own frameworks to suit their students' phase of development.

| |
|---|
| Topic or subject of talk: |
| Possible questions: |
| Possible answers: |
| Possible questions: |
| Possible answers: |
| Possible questions: |
| Possible answers: |

**Figure 4.16 What Questions?**

It is essential that students are aware of the purpose, situation and audience for their presentation. The structure of a spoken presentation needs to follow clearly defined steps: opening, body and conclusion. Support your students by explicitly teaching them the required steps. An effective speech will have the following essential elements:

- A strong opening that introduces the subject and captures the attention of the audience.
- A clear concise message that is repeated at least once during the presentation.
- A balance of fact and opinion.
- An appropriate use of any examples and props, e.g. charts, pictures, slides and handouts.
- A conclusion that relates back to the opening.

A basic speech plan is shown in Figure 4.17. It will need to be adjusted to suit your students' phase of development.




© Department of Education WA 2013

| |
|---|
| Topic or Subject of Talk |
| Opening: State your point of view |
| **1** Facts or arguments and examples:<br>Give reasons *why* you believe this. |
| **2** Facts or arguments and examples:<br>Give another reason why you believe this. |
| **3** Facts or arguments and examples:<br>Give another reason why you believe this. |
| Conclusion:<br>Sum up your facts, arguments or reasons. |

**Figure 4.17 Speech Plan**

When presenting to an audience, students will benefit from:

- knowing how to use their voices effectively, e.g. volume, tone, pace and clarity
- being aware of the audience and responding to them, e.g. body language
- considering audience involvement
- knowing how to use props to enhance their presentation
- developing effective introductions and closures
- responding to questions.

### *Using Visual Aids*

Visual aids can be used to support speakers and listeners in a variety of planned and unplanned interactions, e.g. diagrams, charts, pictures, data, models and artefacts.

Visual aids such as diagrams, charts, and pictures can be effective in supporting speakers and listeners in a variety of planned and unplanned interactions. Some of the benefits of using visual aids are outlined below.

- **Supporting understanding** Visual images help a speaker to explain or demonstrate a particular point, and can make the message clear to the listener.

- **Processing information** Visual information is received and processed by the brain faster than a verbal message. Visual aids are especially useful in helping people to quickly understand complex or abstract ideas.




© Department of Education WA 2013

- **Enhancing attention and memory** Visual images engage the audience and keep them interested in the message being delivered. They also help listeners to make connections with previous knowledge and help them retain the new knowledge being presented.

- **Aiding timing and pace** Using visuals can create natural pauses, helping the speaker to control the pace of the speech.

Students need to be explicitly taught how to use visual aids. While visual aids can enhance a presentation, they can also act as a distraction.

### *Using Information Technology*

Information technology skills enable students to make choices that can enhance their presentations. Teach students how to use clip art and desktop publishing, as well as specialist packages such as PowerPoint and Hyperstudio. Students will benefit from learning how to use specialist audio and visual equipment, as well as learning how to create sound and images.

### *Using Anecdotes*

Anecdotes are stories from personal experience or from someone else's experience. Anecdotes can feature in any type of speaking. People often relate anecdotes during conversations as a way of connecting with the topic being discussed, or as a way of illustrating a point.

Effective speakers use anecdotes to make a point. Rather than just stating a fact or an idea, telling an anecdote illustrates the message and can help listeners remember what is being said. Anecdotes can be rehearsed, allowing the speaker to tell them with confidence and fluency.

**Figure 4.18 Effective Speakers Use Anecdotes to Make a Point**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

### *Using Rehearsal*

Rehearsal is an effective way to gain confidence. Students will need to rehearse prior to the presentation for planned speaking. The written speech should be broken into parts, with a key phrase for each part. These key phrases could be written onto small cards (palm cards) to act as a guide.

Students should rehearse their speech several times, using the cards as prompts. Rehearsals could be taped, allowing students to review their speech and make any changes. Being able to answer the questions in Figure 4.19 will help students to create a formal talk.

**Questions for Students to Consider**

- What is the purpose of my presentation?
- What do I want the audience to know?
- What would be the most effective presentation format to use?
- Am I comfortable with the information in my presentation?
- Do I need to include any extra features?
- Have I anticipated possible questions and audience reactions?
- Have I rehearsed what I am going to say so that I am familiar with the content and format?

**Figure 4.19**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Speaking Process: Managing Speaking

Being a successful speaker involves more than just producing or replicating a spoken text form. For students to be considered competent, they need to be able to successfully manage a number of different factors. They need to be able to interact with their audience, responding to positive and negative audience feedback and making the necessary adjustments. They must be able to predict, self-monitor, respond to questions, summarise and synthesise thoughts, and explain and justify their opinions.

## Effective Speakers Manage Their Speaking

Effective speakers:

- speak clearly
- use language, vocabulary and social conventions appropriate to the context, purpose and audience
- are aware when communication breaks down, and are able to use appropriate fix-up strategies, e.g. repeating themselves, rephrasing or restating what was said
- are able to anticipate the information needed in a particular situation, and able to supply it if needed
- understand and respond to non-verbal language, e.g. facial expressions, gaze, stance and posture
- shift style according to the formality of the situation, e.g. talking with their grandmother or talking with peers on the weekend
- are able to build on others' contributions and still maintain meaning
- explain and defend their personal point of view to others.

## Supporting Students During Speaking

Students need to build their competence to speak in a wide range of social situations. When considering how to support students during their speaking, it is important to remember that most of the speaking they do in the class will not be planned formal speech. Provide opportunities for students to participate in a wide range of speaking interactions, e.g. one on one, small groups, larger groups and whole class. Students need to learn that spoken language is spontaneous and that they are creating it as they are speaking. This means that speakers may:

- have false starts, where they go back and change what they want to say, rephrasing it




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

- often leave an utterance uncompleted or backtrack to correct or clarify something they have already said
- pause while they are thinking about what they want to say
- use fillers (e.g. I mean ...) and voiced pauses (e.g. um, ar) while they hold their turn and think about what they want to say next.

**Figure 4.20 Students Build on Each Other's Contributions**


© Department of Education WA 2013

# Speaking Process: Reflecting, Reviewing and Refining

It is important that students have the time and support to reflect on their own speaking. Students will benefit from being able to critically reflect on the effectiveness of their speaking, whether it is planned speech acts that have taken place in formal settings, or speech that has occurred in unplanned informal settings. Reflecting will allow them to refine their speech and set goals for future interactions.

## Effective Speakers Reflect on Their Speaking

Effective speakers:

- are able to analyse and critically evaluate what they have said
- can review notes they made before speaking to evaluate their effectiveness
- are able to receive feedback and build on it for future speaking
- are able to develop a new or deeper understanding of the topic and of the speaking experience through discussion and questioning
- set goals for further speaking.

## Supporting Students to Reflect

Students' reflection needs to include feedback from teachers and peers, as this forms an essential part of setting realistic and achievable goals. See Chapter 3 of the *Speaking and Listening Map of Development* and Chapter 9 of the *First Steps Linking Teaching and Assessment* book for more information on goal setting, self-assessment and peer assessment.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Listening Process: Overview

Listening is more than just hearing words and sounds. While hearing can be defined as 'receiving sound', listening is part of a complex active thinking process that includes attaching meaning to the sound (Opitz and Zbaracki 2004). Listeners interact with a speaker to receive messages, construct meaning and respond to spoken and non-verbal messages. Listening, like reading, is an invisible mental process; this makes it difficult to describe. Listeners must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structure, and interpret stress and intonation. While doing all this, listeners need to retain and interpret this information in its immediate context and in its larger socio-cultural context.

Support students to become effective listeners. Make them aware of the different kinds of listening, the different purposes for listening, the qualities of good listeners, and the stages of the listening process.

## Different Types of Listening and Different Types of Listening Contexts

Listening has been categorised in numerous ways. The four types of listening defined by Wolvin and Coakley (1992) is one of the simplest systems for students to understand. It comprises:

- **Informational Listening** Listening to receive information, follow instructions or directions
- **Critical Listening** Listening to evaluate information
- **Appreciative Listening** Listening for enjoyment
- **Empathetic Listening** Listening to support others, without passing judgement.

For students to become effective listeners, they need to develop and practise different types of listening in a range of different contexts, e.g. listening to music on the radio, listening to a lecture, listening to a friend telling a personal story, taking part in an interview. There are four contexts in which listening occurs, as shown in Figure 4.21.

The interaction in these contexts may be either one-way or two-way, and the topics talked about can be everyday interpersonal topics or informational topics (Nunan 1990, cited Gibbons 2002).




© Department of Education WA 2013

**Types of Listening**

**Two-way**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Interpersonal Topics** | **Quadrant A**<br>*Taking part in:*<br>• a conversation at a party<br>• a conversation at a bus stop about the weather<br>• a chatty phone call with a friend. | **Quadrant C**<br>*Taking part in:*<br>• a job interview<br>• a conversation involving the giving of directions or instructions<br>• a phone inquiry about buying a computer. |
| | **Quadrant B**<br>*Listening to:*<br>• someone recounting a personal anecdote<br>• someone telling a story<br>• someone telling a joke. | **Quadrant D**<br>*Listening to:*<br>• the radio or TV news<br>• a lecture<br>• phone information, e.g. a recorded timetable, or instructions for paying a bill. |

**Information-based Topics**

*(Nunan 1990, cited Gibbons 2002)*

**One-way**

**Figure 4.21 Contexts for Listening**

The listening process includes three distinct stages: before listening, during listening and after listening.

- **Before listening** Decide on what type of listening is required.
- **During listening** Monitor comprehension, making use of strategies such as self-questioning, synthesising and connecting.
- **After listening** Reflect on and review listening.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Listening Process: Planning and Preparing

Students need to be given the opportunity to plan, gather and organise prior to the act of listening. Provide students with the time and support to investigate and analyse the demands of the variety of different listening situations involved. Teachers can further support students' development by making them aware that different situations might require different types of listening, or a flexible combination of a number of types of listening. This will depend on the listeners' reasons for listening, the context of the listening and the speakers' purpose for communicating. Students need to know what their purpose for listening is in any given situation.

Students' prior experiences and socio-cultural backgrounds will impact on their listening behaviors. Teachers need to be aware of this, especially when teaching ESL or ESD students who may not share cultural or social behaviours, such as those behaviours assumed in a school or workplace. Pre-listening activities need to provide opportunities for students to plan and organise for listening, especially in unfamiliar contexts. The questions in Figure 4.22 provide a suggested reflective framework for supporting students during their pre-listening activities.

**Pre-listening Reflective Questions**

**Why am I listening?** What is my purpose? To follow directions? To receive information?

**What sort of listening is required?** Critical? Empathetic? Enjoyment? Social?

**What do I already know about the topic?**

**What do I think I will find out?**

**How will I record key information?**

**Figure 4.22**

Teachers can support students in the pre-listening stage by providing suitable learning experiences. These activities will help students make informed decisions about what to listen for and what to pay attention to while listening, while encouraging them to access and use their existing cultural, linguistic and personal knowledge. They should include the following activities.

- Activities that develop or build on students' background knowledge.
- Activities that provide a purpose for listening, e.g. What information is required? How much detail is required?




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Supplying and discussing the meaning of any subject- or concept-specific vocabulary, as well as any words or signal phrases that might be used.
- Encourage students to make predictions about what they will be listening to; make use of organisational frameworks, so that students can reflect and review their initial predictions both during and after listening.
- Encourage students to formulate the questions they might have during listening; any questions not answered during the speech act could be directed to the speaker after listening, or discussed with peers for clarification.
- Prepare students for listening by making them aware of the listening protocol in particular situations. Students need to understand that they need to be attentive in order to listen effectively. However, students from different cultural, social or religious backgrounds may have a different concept of 'listening attentively' and teachers should be aware of this. It is common practice for speakers from Standard Australian English backgrounds to look directly at the speaker when they are listening, but this is not necessarily appropriate for other cultures.
- Students also need to be taught the appropriate conventions for joining a conversation. (See Chapter 3 'Conventions' on pages 132–134.)
- Discuss the most suitable listening behaviours for specific situations and record them on a class chart. Reflect on these behaviours with students after the listening is complete to review how successful the behaviours were.

## Effective Listeners Know How to Prepare and Plan

Effective listeners are able to make choices about how to plan, depending on the purpose, audience and situation for their listening; and depending on their familiarity with the topic and the speaker. Effective listeners are able to do the following:

- Discuss their thinking with others.
- Determine their own purpose(s) for listening.
- Select ways to listen according to the purpose, situation and context.
- Activate existing knowledge and build new understanding.
- Be prepared to listen (both mentally and physically).
- Use different techniques to organise ideas, e.g. thinking-aloud, brainstorming, drawing, listing, using graphic organisers.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Supporting Listeners to Plan

### *Call Out*

Call Out is an easy activity that can be used to activate prior knowledge; it allows students to refine their ideas and share their thinking with others.

- Students reflect on what they already know about a topic or situation.
- Allow students to have individual think time, then call for ideas on the topic.
- Students call out their ideas. Accept all ideas as stated, without any criticising, paraphrasing or judging.
- Students use the ideas as a point of reference to plan their listening.

### *Brainstorming*

Brainstorming is a technique for activating students' prior knowledge. It is an extension of the Call Out activity, and can be used with the whole class, small groups or individual students. When brainstorming prior to listening, give students a limited time to discuss or record all that they know about a topic. Ideas are shared and written down as they spring to mind, with all ideas being accepted and recorded. There are no right or wrong responses when brainstorming ideas.

- Discuss the selected topic (or the reason for listening, or the type of listening that will be needed).
- Provide time for students to record everything they know about the chosen topic.
- Allow students to share and discuss brainstormed ideas.

Have students use the ideas from their brainstorming as the basis for planning their listening.

### *Brain Writing*

Some students feel intimidated by the open nature of Call Out and Brainstorming, and they fail to make any significant contributions. Brain Writing can be used for these students.

- Each team member lists four ideas on a sheet of paper placed in the middle of the table.
- The paper is then passed around the team (or around another group) and new ideas are added.
- Once all the ideas have been added, students categorise ideas into similar groups.
- Ideas are then prioritised in order of importance.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *Focus on Key Vocabulary*

Students often listen to spoken texts that require knowledge of specific vocabulary, e.g. subject-specific texts, scientific and mathematical procedures, geographical descriptions. Students who lack this knowledge will fail to make any significant meaning of the texts. Teachers need to provide students with this vocabulary knowledge by giving them a chance to analyse and discuss the vocabulary required prior to listening. (See 'Conventions' in Chapter 3, on pages 137–141.)

### *T.Q.L.R.*

T.Q.L.R is short for **T**une, **Q**uestion, **L**isten, **R**eview. It is an activity that will improve students' ability to recall information and to listen in a focused manner. Have students follow these steps:

**T** is to tune in. Use eye contact to give the speaker your attention; determine the speaker's topic and recall what you already know about the topic.
**Q** is to ask questions to make sure you understand what is being said:
– What is the purpose for my listening? e.g Am I listening for directions? For information? For an explanation?
– What point is the speaker making?
– What devices is the speaker using for support?
– What do I need to remember?
**L** is to listen actively to what is being said. Have your questions been answered? Try to predict what is coming next; listen for words or phrases that can help you.
**R** is for review, to see if you understand the task or if you need to ask more questions.

Discuss effective listening behaviours such as TQLR, or have students consider the guidelines listed in Figure 4.23. Point out to students that the process of listening is not a linear set of steps to follow in a prescriptive manner. Instead, listeners will move back and forth between stages as the listening context demands.

**Guidelines for Effective Listening**

- Keep an open mind about the speaker and the topic.
- Stay focused on the speaker and topic.
- Identify the purpose and main ideas.
- Listen and watch for special elements.
- Anticipate what comes next.
- Summarise the speaker's main points.

**Figure 4.23**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

## *Listening Guides*

Listening guides can be used to activate knowledge prior to listening; to focus attention during listening; and to reflect on after listening.

**Pre-listening Guide**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Listening Situation: _____

Purpose for Listening: _____

Type of Listening to be Used: _____

Speaker's Purpose: _____

Question to be Answered: _____

**Figure 4.24**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Listening Process: Managing Listening

Encourage students to self-monitor their comprehension during listening, and to decide on listening strategies that will enable them to maintain their understanding. They need to be aware of their level of understanding, and to verify and revise their predictions. To do this effectively, students need to develop the ability to self-question as they listen. The act of listening is a highly complex task. It is an invisible task, making it hard for teachers to know what is happening inside students' minds. Teachers need to support students in this stage of the process by:

- explicitly demonstrating and rehearsing the strategies before listening, e.g. think-aloud strategy.
- reflecting, after listening, on the effectiveness of the strategies used.

Encourage listeners to use a range of strategies while listening, e.g. asking themselves questions, repeating interesting words and phrases back to themselves, forming questions to ask the speaker, making connections to what they already know, making comparisons and inferences, making notes, speculating about whether they are hearing facts or opinions. Effective listeners are able to flexibly select and use a range of strategies.

## Effective Listeners Know How to Manage Their Listening

Effective listeners:

- know the purpose for listening
- know what sort of listening is required and are able to adjust their listening behaviours accordingly
- try to 'picture' in their mind what is being said
- constantly check their understanding, e.g. making connections, making and confirming predictions, making inferences, evaluating and reflecting
- send appropriate feedback to the speaker, e.g. using appropriate body language, asking relevant questions, restating information when appropriate to let the speaker know that they have understood, repeating directions
- identify transitional or signal words and phrases that help them follow the speaker's meaning.
- observe and interpret the speaker's non-verbal language, e.g. facial gestures, stance, body gestures




© Department of Education WA 2013

- recognise the main idea of the message
- are able to 'listen between the lines', making inferences about the speaker's intent from what they say, as well as from their gaps and silences
- can distinguish fact from opinion
- recognise personal points of view and are able to determine personal bias (both their own and the speaker's bias)
- can take meaningful notes.

## Supporting Listeners to Manage Their Listening

Students already have a range of active listening skills when they first enter school; however, the skills are usually incidental and unconscious. Support students to develop their control of these skills by making them aware of what they are and when they can be used in particular contexts.

### 1 Active Listening Skills

Four of the skills that active listeners should use are:
**Encouragers** Giving verbal reassurances that you are listening to what is being said, e.g. hmm, okay, I see, great, really. The tone of voice must be appropriate to the context. Encouragers can also include positive body language e.g nodding the head, smiling.
**Rephrasing** Restating and repeating back part of what the speaker has said to confirm the listener's understanding and acknowledgement.
**Reflecting Feelings** Drawing inferences from what the speaker has said and offering suitable empathetic responses.
**Questioning** Asking a mixture of open and closed questions. Students need to be explicitly taught when and how to question. It is not always appropriate for the listener to question the speaker whenever it occurs to them, as they might interrupt the speaker and the flow of the conversation. Students also need to be aware that 'overasking' questions during a conversation can be considered interrogation; this will depend on the situation, audience and purpose, e.g. A mother asking her teenager about their day; the teenager might consider this interrogation, but the mother might consider she is just being interested (Ryan & Pauley 2004).

Enhance students' ability to apply these skills independently by providing opportunities for them to practise the skills in a wide range of situations, and to reflect on their effectiveness. There are a variety of activities that can be used to support listeners in managing their listening. The following list provides some suitable activities:




© Department of Education WA 2013

- Directed Listening Thinking Activity
- Note-taking
- Verbatim Split Page Procedure
- Visualise and Note-take

### *Directed Listening Thinking Activity*

The Directed Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) allows students to develop their thinking skills while listening. Students are required to combine background knowledge with new information to make predictions and draw inferences. Discussion occurs before, during and after the listening. The process is as follows:

1 The teacher reads or tells the title to students and asks what the story might be about. Record students' predictions on the board or on a chart.
2 Students listen to the first section of the text. Remind students of their predictions, and ask them if they still think the same as they did earlier.
3 Continue through the text, predicting, reading to students and reacting to their predictions.

DLTA helps students to develop early critical reading skills. It also helps students to develop metacognition of their own reading comprehension, and helps them engage in text that is too difficult for their current reading ability (Opitz and Zbaracki 2004).

### *Note-taking*

Refer to 'Note-taking' in the Speaking section, on page 178.

### *Verbatim Split Page Procedure*

The Verbatim Split Page Procedure (VSSP) is a strategy that helps students take notes while listening to a speaker. The VSPP comprises a section for recording notes and a section for organising notes.

**Recording Notes** Students prepare the page by dividing it with a 60/40 fold. This fold should allow for the left side of the paper to represent 40% of the page and the right side of the page to represent 60% of the page.

Have students jot down notes on the left side of the page while they listen. The notes should be verbatim, but brief, with the focus on actively listening to the speaker.

**Organising Notes** After the speaking, but before any discussion, encourage students to expand their notes on the right side of the paper. The notes should be arranged in an outline format.




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

Students then interpret the notes and put the ideas in their own words. Notes should incorporate 'thinking between the lines': adding any important information missing from the notes they took during the lecture. Students should clarify the meaning of any unknown words, phrases or sentences so that their notes are clear for future use.

### *Visualise and Note-take*

This activity involves students pictorially representing concepts and main ideas; it's an activity that will enhance students' understanding and ability to interpret a spoken text. The choice of text for this activity requires careful consideration, as not all texts are suitable.

- Provide students with a spoken text, e.g. audiotape, videotape, live speech act.
- Have students listen to the text.
- Have the students listen again, this time pausing at relevant places to record a visual image of their understanding, e.g. a sketch, a flow-chart or a map. As students become familiar with this activity, it can be used as a means of checking for comprehension during any learning activity.
- Have students share their representations with a partner or small group.

## 2 Critical Listening Skills

The ability to think critically is a major component in effective listening. Critical listeners must analyse and evaluate the speaker's message in order to determine whether they agree or disagree. This is an evaluative form of listening that encourages the listener to be more aware of the speaker's intent.

Clear criteria should be established for judging a message. This is particularly important when evaluating a persuasive message, e.g. advertisements, political speeches, propaganda, sales pitches. Effective persuasive messages are based on prestige, reputation and the speaker's credibility. A good persuasive speaker will emphasise the authority and trustworthiness of the message. These messages will appeal to the listeners at an emotive level, e.g. the listener's sense of achievement, adventure, creativity, curiosity, independence, gender, fear, power, pride or loyalty.

The critical listener must be aware of stereotypes and the speaker's bias to be able to evaluate messages successfully. They have to be able to:

- distinguish between fact and opinion




© Department of Education WA 2013

- distinguish between emotive and informative language
- detect bias and prejudice
- evaluate the speaker's argument
- recognise devices used to manipulate opinion, e.g. propaganda, emotive words
- draw inferences and make judgements
- check misunderstandings by asking questions
- delay judgement
- know how to disagree in an agreeable way.

To be effective listeners, students must understand the messages and make informed judgements about accepting or rejecting the speaker's ideas. Encourage students to be aware of a speaker's motives and help them to determine the speaker's intent. This is an essential skill for students to acquire, as they are continually exposed to a wide range of media influences. It is vital that teachers plan classroom activities that encourage critical listening and model how to listen critically. The following list provides some suitable activities for encouraging critical listening:

- Examine the Message
- Analyse the Advertisements
- What Do I Really Mean?
- What's the Issue?
- Main Idea Pyramid

### *Examine the Message*

The table in Figure 4.25 suggests one way to critically examine a speaker's message.

**Listening Critically**

| | |
|---|---|
| **What's the Message?** | • Identify the speaker's topic, purpose, intended audience and situation<br>• Identify the main ideas<br>• Ask probing questions<br>• Take notes |
| **Who's the Speaker?** | • Is the speaker an expert?<br>• Is the speaker trustworthy?<br>• Is the speaker credible? |
| **What's the Evidence?** | • Facts • Statistics • Opinions<br>• Quotations using expert testimony |
| **How is it Presented?** | • In order • As an argument<br>• As an attack • As inferred guilt |

**Figure 4.25**



FIRST005 | Speaking and listening resource book
© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

### *Analyse the Advertisements*

Analysing advertisements involves listening to an advertisement and deciding on the device being used to influence the audience. A range of advertisements from media sources can be used for this activity, which can be used across all phases.

Encourage students in the early phases to look at the advertisements critically by imitating advertisements they have seen or heard on TV, the Internet or the radio. They can use drama activities to imitate voice qualities and statements they have heard in advertisements. Students in older phases can develop this activity further by developing their own scripts and advertisements.

Studying advertisements can help students to compare statements used to support brands or products, to make inferences, and to distinguish fact from opinion.

Having students analyse the language of advertising (the vocabulary and phrases used) will also enhance their ability to distinguish fact from opinion. They should look for:

- words used to surprise or shock
- the use of 'happy' words and statements to make consumers feel good
- the use of 'approval' language, to get the consumer to want to be like everyone else
- use of repetition to emphasise an idea or concept.

The website www.visit4.info can be used to view different TV and cinema advertisements. You'll need to find and preview the advertisements you're going to use, as some of the material is of a sensitive and explicit nature.

Provide *infomercials* for students to analyse. Infomercials are advertisements that combine advertising and information; they're designed to look like they are giving advice, but their purpose is selling a product. Have students look at the devices used to make the text sound more like information than persuasion. Many lifestyle, current affairs and radio programmes contain stories that are variants of infomercials, known as *advertorials*. Advertorials are a combination of advertising and editorial content (Quinn 2005). Because students are exposed to an enormous amount of advertising, it is essential that they develop the skills to analyse information and listen critically.




© Department of Education WA 2013

### *What Do I Really Mean?*

Encourage students from all phases to check for misunderstandings and subtleties in what they hear, e.g. Someone may say 'It's cold in here!', when they really mean 'Close the door'. Class or group discussions of statements like these will improve students' ability to make inferences about the speaker's intended message.

### *What's the Issue?*

Students can take part in fishbowl or panel discussions on controversial, serious or interesting issues. Individuals in the audience listen to the elements of the argument being presented, and investigate and analyse the effectiveness of the devices the speakers use to present their views.

### *Main Idea Pyramid*

The Main Idea pyramid is a graphic organiser that helps students determine and record important information they have heard. It is a graphic organiser that helps to show the relationships between supporting details and the main idea.

- Have students listen to a spoken text or parts of a text in pairs or small groups, e.g. teacher or peer reading a story, a taped interview, a news report, a story.
- Students note the facts and ideas they heard on cards or sticky notes.
- Students then group their cards or notes into general sub-topics and place them at the base of the pyramid.
- Have students re-read the combination of words or phrases in each group; they then discuss and record a main idea statement for each group. These statements form the second level of the pyramid.
- Students then use the information at the second level to create a main idea of the text. This forms the top level of the pyramid.
- Allow time for the groups to share their ideas with the class.

**Main Idea Pyramid**

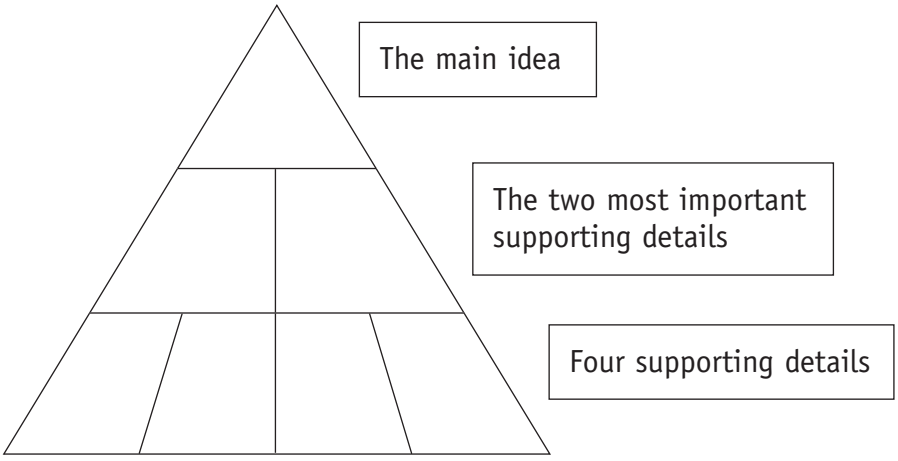



**Figure 4.26 Main Idea Pyramid**




© Department of Education WA 2013

# After Listening: Reflecting, Reviewing and Refining

It is important to give students time and support to reflect on their listening. Students need to reflect on their comprehension, to compare and discuss the strategies they used, and to talk about alternatives. Reflection should be done in pairs, in small groups or as a whole class, not just individually. Reflecting on listening experiences is critical, as it allows students to reflect on what they have heard, clarifying meaning and expanding their thinking. Well-planned reflection and review is as important as planning before and during listening.

## Effective Listeners Know How to Reflect on Their Listening and Set Goals for Improvement

Effective listeners:

- can analyse and critically evaluate what they have heard
- can review notes made during listening and add new or reconfirmed information
- are able to develop a new (or deeper) understanding of the topic and the listening experience through discussion and questioning
- set goals for further listening.

## Supporting Listeners to Reflect and Set Goals

A comprehensive range of reflection activities can be found on pages 169–183 of the *First Steps Linking Assessment Teaching and Learning* book, as well as Chapter 3 of the *First Steps Speaking and Listening Map of Development*.




© Department of Education WA 2013

# Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| **code-switching** | Alternating between two or more languages, dialects or language registers during a discourse between people who share more than one language in common. The code-switch may last a few sentences or for just one phrase. |
| **cognitive** | The ability to think, to be aware and to reason. |
| **communicative competence** | The ability to use spoken language appropriately, making adjustments to suit a particular context. |
| **communicative context** | The context surrounding a spoken communication. This includes the audience, the purpose of the speaking and listening and the situation in which it takes place. |
| **culture** | The way in which people's attitudes, values and beliefs are communicated to each other throughout society. |
| **discourse** | The use of language by members of a speech community. Discourse identifies linguistic features that characterise different genres, as well as social and cultural factors that help us interpret and understand different texts and types of talk. |
| **discourse types** | Type of language used by a speech community, e.g. a scientific discourse, conversational discourse, speculative or exploratory discourse. Students need to be familiar with a range of social discourses so that they gain mastery over how to behave, talk and dress in these situations. |
| **facilitate** | To assist the progress of a discussion or conversation; resolving an issue. |
| **metalinguistics** | The ability to think about language and talk about it. |
| **paralanguage** | The non-verbal elements of communication used to modify meaning and convey emotion. Paralanguage can be expressed consciously or unconsiously; it includes limb and body gestures, facial expressions, pitch, volume and speech intonation. |
| **point of view** | The way a person adopts a particular perspective or interpretation of an issue or idea. |
| **pragmatic** | The way that spoken language is used practically in everyday life, including the behaviours that accompany the language (gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice). |




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

**repertoire** The store of knowledge that can be utilised for speaking and listening in a range of contexts. This includes knowledge of registers, dialects, Standard Australian English and when it is most appropriate to use them.

**social status** A perceived position that a person has within their own culture.

**socio-cultural** A combinination of social and cultural factors, such as economic status, geographical location, beliefs and values.

**sociolinguistics** The study of language and linguistic behaviour, as influenced by social and cultural factors. Factors influencing the choice of sounds, grammatical elements and vocabulary include age, gender, education, ethnic identity, occupation and peer-group identification.

**stereotypes** Generalised categories of people; may refer to gender, age or culture.




© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

# Bibliography

'A Curriculum Guide for the Middle Level (Grades 6–9), Speaking and Listening: Instructional Philosophy and Teaching Suggestions', *Evergreen Curriculum Guides & Resources*, English Language Arts, <http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/mla/speak.html>.

'A Curriculum Guide for the Middle Level (Grades 6–9): Speaking and Listening Activities', *Evergreen Curriculum Guides & Resources*, English Language Arts, <http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/mla/listen.html>.

Abbott, C., and Godhino, S. 2004, *Speak, Listen and Learn: Building Speaking Discussion and Presentation Skills into Every Classroom*, Pembroke Publishing, Canada.

Ausubel, D.P. 1968, *Educational Psychology: A Cognitive View*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, USA.

Bennett, B., and Rolheiser, C. 2001, *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration*, Bookation Inc., Toronto, Canada.

Bennett, B., Rolheiser, C., and Stevahn, L. 1991, *Cooperative Learning: Where the Heart Meets the Mind*, Educational Directions, Toronto, Canada.

Black, P. 1995, *The Dance of Language – Some Practical Linguistic Approaches*, Centre for Studies of Language in Education, Northern Territory University, Darwin, Australia.

Boomer, G. 1999, *Oral Language and the Teaching of English: An Inservice Package*, Australian Association for the Teaching of English, SA, Australia.

Bowey, J. 1988, *Metalinguistic Functioning in Children*, Deakin University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Collerson, J. 1994, *English Grammar: A Functional Approach*, Primary English Teachers Association, NSW, Australia.

Communication and Leadership Program 1999, Toastmasters International Inc., USA.

Copeland, M. 2005, *Socratic Circles: Fostering Critical and Creative Thinking in Middle and High School*, Stenhouse Publishers, Portland, USA.

Curriculum Programmes Branch. 1998, *Speaking and Listening*, draft edition, Ministry of Education, WA, Australia.

Curriculum Council. 1998, *Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia*, Osborne Park, WA, Australia.

Daniels, H. 1994, *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom*, Stenhouse Publishers, Maine, USA.

Department of Education, Tasmania, School Education Division, English Learning Area, <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/english/neelands.htm>.

Derewianka, B. 1995, *Exploring How Texts Work*, Primary English Teaching Association, NSW, Australia.

Derewianka, B. 1992, *Language Assessment in Primary Classrooms*, Harcourt Brace & Co, Sydney, Australia.

Department of Education and Training. 2005, *Outcomes and Standards Framework: English*, East Perth, WA, Australia.

Department of Education and Training. 2004, *Powerful Ways: A Meta-Language and Literacy Development Project — Scaffolding Language for Learning*, East Perth, WA, Australia.


© Department of Education WA 2013
Reviewed August 2013

Dickenson, D.K., and Tabors, P.O. 2002, 'Fostering Language and Literacy in Classrooms and Homes', *Young Children*, 57 (2), pp. 10–15.

East End Talking, <http://www.eastendtalking.org.uk>.

Edwards, V. 1995, *Speaking and Listening in Multilingual Classrooms*, Reading and Language Information Centre, University of Reading, UK.

Eeds, M., and Wells, D. 1989, 'Grand conversations: An exploration of meaning construction in literature study groups', *Research in the Teaching of English*, 23 (1), pp. 4–29.

Frangenheim, E. 1999, *Reflections on Classroom Thinking: Strategies to Encourage Thinking in Your Classroom*, Rodin Educational Publishers, Australia.

Gibbons, P. 2002, *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning – Teaching Second Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, USA.

Godinho, S., and Shrimpton, B. 2005, *Talking to Learn, Learning to Talk* (a CD-ROM about small group work), University of Melbourne, Australia.

Goldenberg, C. 1993, 'Instructional conversations: Promoting comprehension through discussion', *The Reading Teacher*, 46, pp. 316–326.

Graves, M.F., and Graves, B.B. 1994, *Scaffolding reading experiences: Designs for student success*, Norwood, MA, USA.

Grugeon, E., Dawes, L., Smith, C., and Hubbard, L. 2005, *Teaching Speaking and Listening in the Primary School*, Third Edition, David Fulton Publishers, UK.

Haig, O., and Rochecouste, J. 2005, *Tackling Talk: Teaching and Assessing Oral Language*, Centre for Applied Language and Research, ECU, Perth, WA, Australia.

Hall, K. 2001, *Monitoring Change in Education: Literacy and Schooling – Towards Renewal in Primary Education Policy*, Ashgate Publishing, UK.

Hammond, J. 2001, *Scaffolding Teaching and Learning in Language and Literacy Education*, Primary English Teaching Association, NSW, Australia.

Healy, A. 2004, 'Multiliteracies Pedagogy', *Practically Primary*, vol 9, no 2, Australian Literacy Educator's Association, SA, Australia.

Hill, M. 1991, 'Writing Summaries', *Journal of Reading*, 34, pp. 536–539.

Hymes, D, *Model of Speaking*, from Wikipedia [online] <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/dell_Hymes_Model_of_Speaking>.

Janks, H. 1993, *Language Identity and Power*, Witwaterstrand Press, South Africa.

Jensen, E., 1995. *Brain-Based Learning & Teaching*. Turning Point Publishing, Del Mar, California, USA.

Jones, P. 1996, *Talking to Learn*, Primary English Teachers Association, NSW, Australia.

Kagan, S. 1994, *Cooperative Learning*, Kagan Publishers, New York, USA.

Keene, E.O., and Zimmerman, S. 1997 *Mosaic of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, USA.

Knapp, P., and Watkins, M. 2005, *Genre, Text and Grammar: Technologies for Teaching and Assessing Writing*, UNSW Press, NSW, Australia.

Knobel, M., and Healey, A.1998, *Critical Literacies in the Primary Classroom*, Primary English Teaching Association, NSW, Australia.




© Department of Education WA 2013

Louden, B., Rohl, M., Barrat-Pugh, C., Brown, C., Cairney, T., Elderfield, J., House, H., Meiers, M., Rivalland, J., Rowe, K. 2005, 'In Teachers' Hands: Effective Literacy Practices in the Early Years of Schooling', *Australian Journal of Language and Learning*, vol. 28, no. 3, Australian Literacy Educator's Association, SA, Australia.

Maclean, R. 2005 'ECL 406 Options in Literacy Education', *Module 3 – Teaching Oral Language*, Deakin University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Mallan, K. 1991, *Children as Story Tellers*, Primary English Teachers Association, Newton, NSW, Australia.

McKenzie, J. *Questioning Toolkit*, <http://questioning.org/Q7/toolkit.html>.

McTighe, J., and Lyman, F.T. 1992, 'Mind Tools for Matters of the Mind', *If Minds Matter: A Foreword to the Future*. vol. 2, Costa, A., Bellanca, J., and Fogarty, R. (eds), Palatine, IL, USA.

Meadows, S. 1993, *The Child as Thinker: The Development and Acquisition of Cognition in Childhood*, Routledge, London, England.

Miyata, C. 2004, *Speaking Rules! Games and Activities for Creating Effective Speakers Presenters and Story Tellers*, Curriculum Corporation, Australia.

Murdoch, K. 1998, *Classroom Connections: Strategies for Integrated learning*, Eleanor Curtain Publishing, Victoria, Australia.

National Curriculum Council. 1991, *Teaching Talking and Learning*, Key Stage Three, UK.

O'Keefe, V. 1999, *Developing Critical Thinking – The Speaking/Listening Connection*, Boyton/Cook Publishers, New Hampshire, USA.

Oliver R., Haig. Y., and Rochecouste, J. 2003, *Oral Language and the Communicative Competence of Adolescents*, Edith Cowan University, Mt Lawley, WA, Australia.

Oliver R., Haig. Y., and Rochecouste, J. 2005, *Tackling Talk and Assessing Oral Language*, Edith Cowan University, Mt Lawley, WA, Australia.

Opitz, M.F., and Zbaracki, M. 2004, *Listen Hear: 25 Effective Listening Strategies*, Heinemann, USA.

Painter, J. 1996, Conference paper presened at the Australian Association for the Education of Gifted and Talented, 1996 Adelaide conference, <http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/gifttal/provision/provques.htm>.

Pearson, P.D. 1976, 'A Psycholinguistic Model of Reading', *Language Arts*, vol. 53, pp. 309–314

——— and Gallagher, M.C. 1983, 'The Instruction of Reading Comprehension, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, vol. 8, pp. 317–344

Pohl, M. 2000, *Learning to Think: Models and Strategies to Develop a Classroom Culture of Thinking*, Hawker Brownlow Education, Heatherton, Victoria, Australia.

Quinn, R., Rayner,H., Solosy, A., 2005. *English Courseways*, Pearson Education, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Reid, J., with Green, B., and English, R. 2002, *Managing Small Group Learning*, Primary English Teaching Association, NSW, Australia.

Robertson, B. M. 1997, *Oral History Handbook*, Openbook Publishers, Adelaide, Victoria, Australia.

Rowe, G. 1991, *Making Time for Classroom Talk*, PEN 82, Primary English Teaching Association, NSW, Australia.


© Department of Education WA 2013

Ryan, K., and Pauley, A. 2004, *The Primary Speaking and Listening Resource Book*, Phoenix Education, Melbourne, Australia.

Ryan, T. 1996, *Mindlinks: Exciting Strategies for Creating the 21st Century Classroom*, HeadFirst Publishing, NSW, Australia.

Senge, P., 1994, *Fifth Discipline Field Book*, Nicholas Brealey, London, UK.

Splitter, L., and Sharp, A.M. 1995, *Teaching for Better Thinking*, ACER, Melbourne, Australia.

Swan, C. 2004, 'Listen to the the Children: Responsive Interactive Talk in Year One', *Practically Primary*, vol 9, no. 3, Australian Literacy Educator's Association, SA, Australia.

Tackling Talk Website [online] <http://www.members.iinet.net.au/~lingwa/TT/>.

Wiederhold, C. 1991, *Cooperative Learning and Higher Level Thinking: The Question Matrix*, San Juan Capistrano, California, USA.

Wilhelm, J. D. 2001, *Improving Comprehension with Think-Aloud Strategies*, Scholastic, New York, USA.

Wilkinson, L. 1995, 'Explicit Teaching', *Cornerstone* (Module 7), Department of Education and Children's Services, Adelaide, SA, Australia.

Wilks, S. 1995, *Critical and Creative Thinking: Strategies for Classroom Inquiry*, Eleanor Curtain Publishing, Melbourne, Australia.

Wilson, J., and Wing, J. 1993, *Thinking for themselves: developing strategies for effective learning*, Eleanor Curtain Publishing, Armadale, Victoria, Australia.

Wolf, D.P. 1987, 'The Art of Questioning', *Academic Connections*, Winter 1987, pp. 1–7, <http://www.exploratorium.edu/IFI/resources/workshops/artofquestioning.html>.

Wolvin, A., and Coakley, C. 1992, *Listening* 4th ed. William, C. Brown, Dubuque, Iowa, USA.

Zimmerman, S., and Hutchinson, C. 2003, *7 Keys to Comprehension: Help Your Kids Read It and Get It*, Three Rivers Press, New York, USA.




© Department of Education WA 2013