



# Teaching Reading The Big Six Oral language

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# Overview of session

**Science of Reading**

**Big 6**

**Oral Language**

Why?

Components –  
what?

How to teach

# Oral Language(Cheat Sheet)

About 98% of human teaching and learning is mediated by language. **Oral Language is the child's first, most important, and most frequently used medium of communication.**

Children who are surrounded by rich and complex conversations, have an **overwhelming advantage** in vocabulary development, in understanding the structures of language, and in tuning into the sounds of the English language.

**Oral language is important for both reading and writing.** If young children are fortunate enough to have stories read to them, and if individual words are pointed out as the stories are read, the process by which spoken language is transformed into written language becomes apparent.

**Many children enter school at a significant disadvantage** and will be further disadvantaged if this is not understood and acknowledged by their school. Their need for support is urgent and paramount

**Some teachers struggle to implement Oral Language** teaching because the underlying framework was unclear to them

**Difficulties with oral language comprehension may go unnoticed** particularly when students have comparatively strong word reading and spelling skills

**Oral Vocabulary is the Key to Reading Comprehension**

# The Science Behind Oral Language

....and its links to reading

# The Simple View of Reading



- The Science of Reading promotes the essential nature of the components of the five pillars in reading: Phonemic Awareness, Alphabetic Principle, Fluency with Text, Vocabulary, and Comprehension, and is honoured within a Structured Literacy approach.
- **Oral Language is the foundation for reading development.**
- Language comprehension is not written language comprehension – it's *oral language* comprehension. As skills in word recognition and language comprehension develop, students also develop reading fluency and reading comprehension.

## The Simple View of Reading



1	X	1	=	1 = 100%
.5	X	1	=	50%
1	X	.5	=	50%
0.5	X	.5	=	25%

# Reading Comprehension

## Language Comprehension

Background  
Knowledge  
and  
Inferencing  
Skills

Linguistic Knowledge

Phonological  
Knowledge

Syntactic  
Knowledge

Semantic  
Knowledge

## Word Recognition

Alphabetic Coding Skill

Concepts  
about Print

Knowledge of the Alphabetic  
Principle

Letter  
Knowledge

Phonemic  
Awareness

# Many Strands Are Woven into Skilled Reading

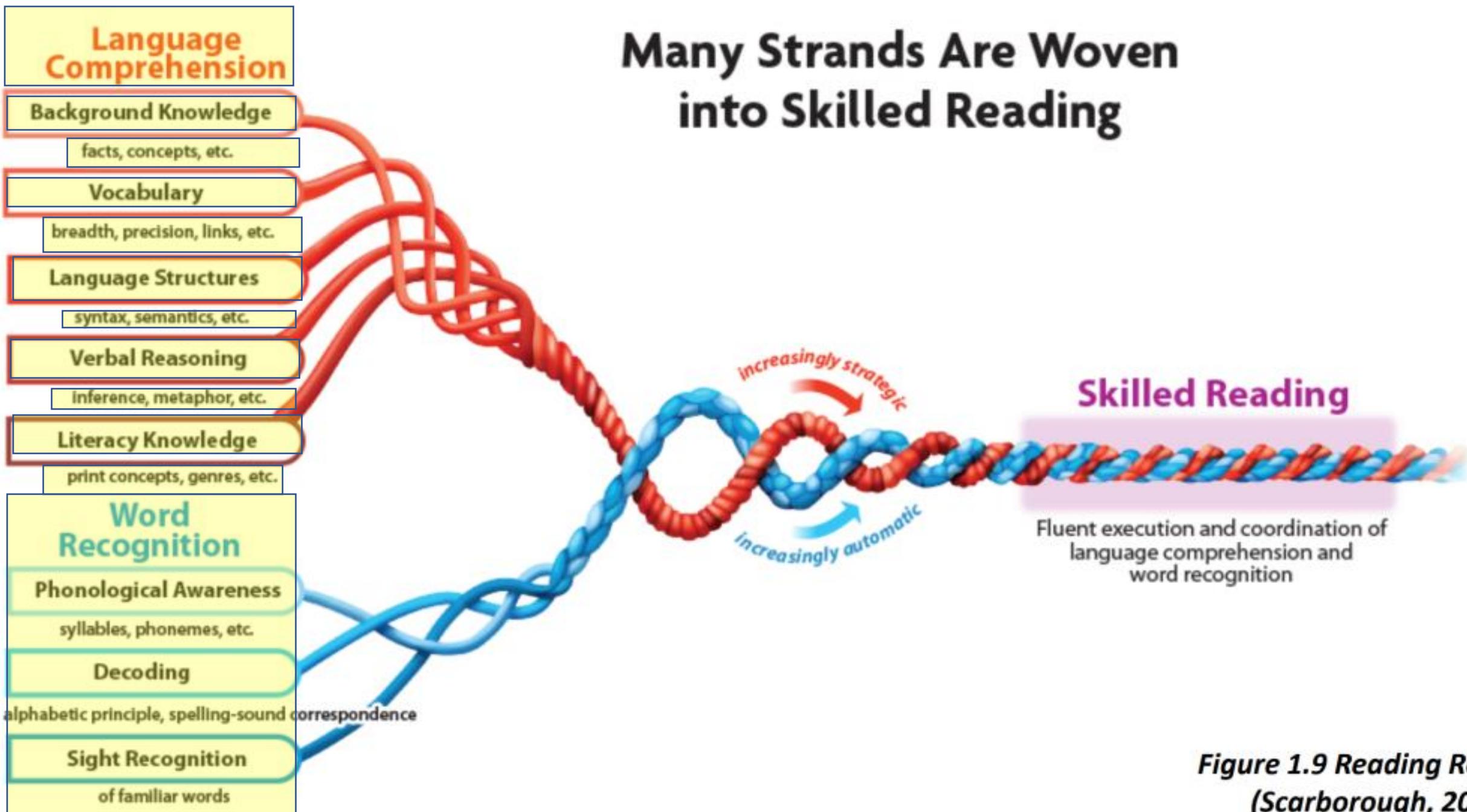
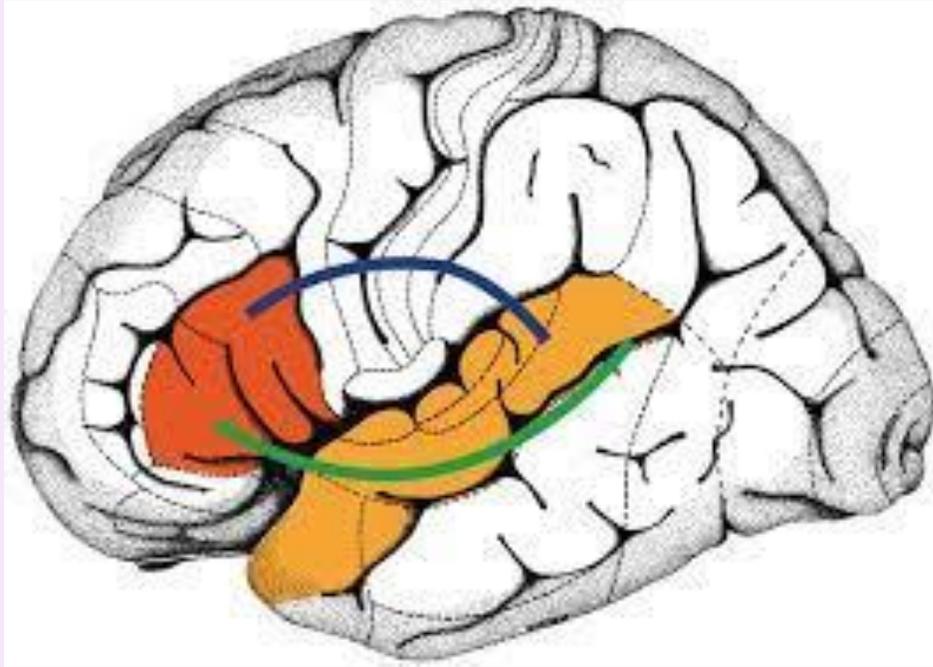
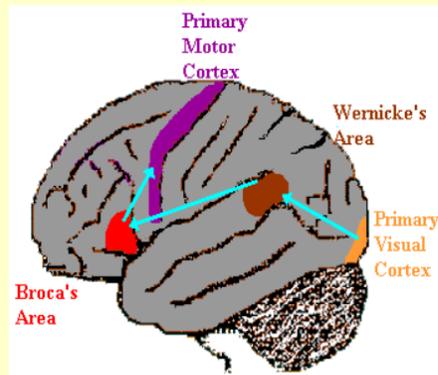


Figure 1.9 Reading Rope  
(Scarborough, 2001)



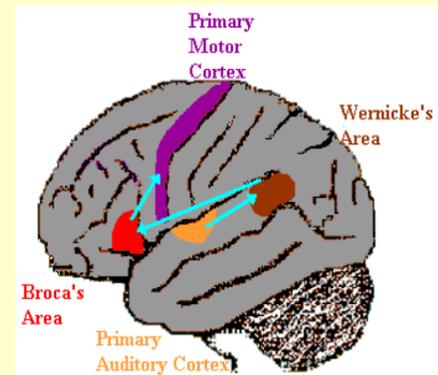
Unlike many skills associated with reading, oral language develops naturally. **Human brains are designed to enable us to talk. There is no naturally occurring, already established pathway for learning to read. We need to repurpose neuronal pathways for reading.** When reading, written words come in through our visual cortex, information is sent through to the speech area of our brain and very quickly after that, to the meaning area of our brain. **Oral language impacts every part of this process.**

Speaking the Written Word



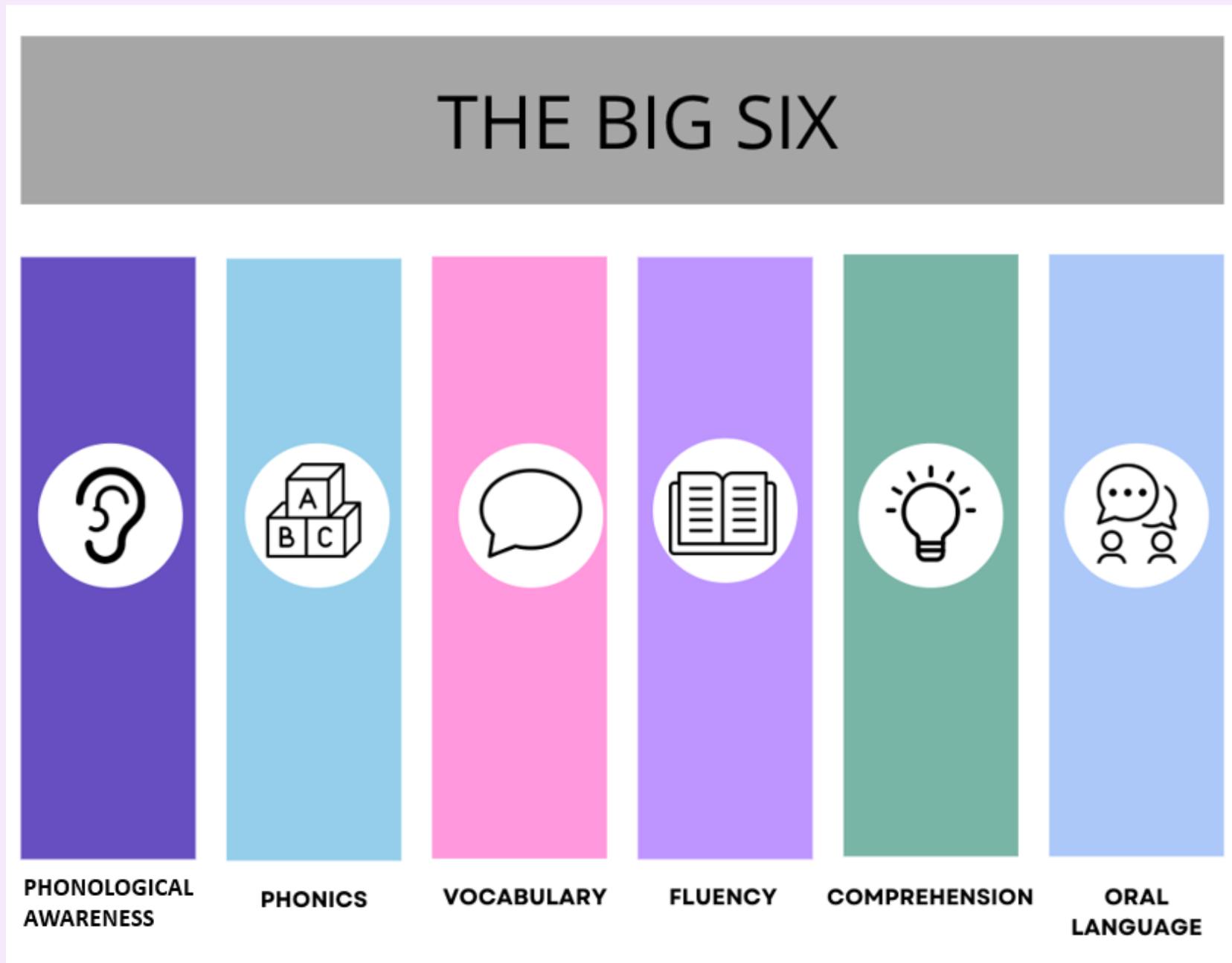
To speak a word that is read, information must first get to the primary visual cortex. From the primary visual cortex, information is transmitted to the posterior speech area, including Wernicke's area, information travels to Broca's area, then to the Primary Motor Cortex.

Speaking the Heard Word



To speak a word that is heard, information must first get to the primary auditory cortex. From the primary auditory cortex, information is transmitted to the posterior speech area, including Wernicke's area, information travels to Broca's area, then to the Primary Motor Cortex.

- Oral Language features strongly in literacy development in the early years AND is essential across years.
- Oral language **underpins all the skills and knowledge that students must develop to become independent readers and writers.** Having a rich oral language foundation makes the process of learning to read and write much easier.



# Using SVR to differentiate student learning

Once you have identified where students sit on the quadrant, you can consider how to address their differentiated learning needs. The following recommendations are provided for each of the quadrants:

## Students with poor word recognition but good language comprehension skills

- Assess the effectiveness of your phonics program. Do you need to adjust the coverage, frequency or pace of your program? Do these students require further instruction with the teacher in decoding? These students may require multiple exposures and extra time to consolidate word recognition skills. It is possible that these students may have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia. Seek support and advice from relevant professionals.
- Continue to read and discuss rich children's literature and information texts within the classroom setting.

## Students with both poor word recognition and poor language comprehension skills

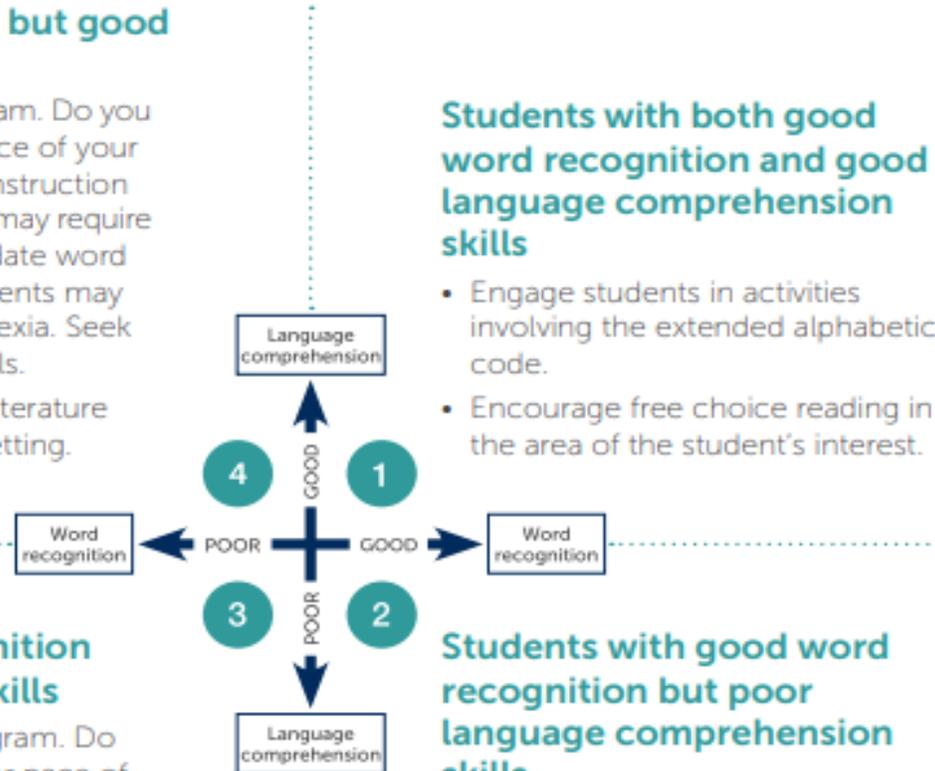
- Assess the effectiveness of your phonics program. Do you need to adjust the coverage, frequency or pace of your program? Do these students need more time on task; peer tutoring; further instruction by the teacher in both decoding and language comprehension; and/or periodic review with an SSO?
- Explore the language comprehension skills the students bring to the classroom. Address any special needs. Acquire expert help if required. Continue to read and discuss rich children's literature within the classroom setting as children often learn from each other.

## Students with both good word recognition and good language comprehension skills

- Engage students in activities involving the extended alphabetic code.
- Encourage free choice reading in the area of the student's interest.

## Students with good word recognition but poor language comprehension skills

- Engage the students in oral language activities that involve dialogic talk.
- Read high-quality literature and information texts to students, accompanied with discussion incorporating shared, sustained interactions.



While Oral Language features in all aspects of this quadrant, it is **ESSENTIAL** as a focus for students who are ....

# The Importance of Oral Language

The research

# Prioritising Oral Language is



- There is a *need for schools to explicitly teach oral language* to meet the needs of the many students who enter school with limited or delayed spoken language; otherwise they will be significantly disadvantaged in their schooling years and beyond (Locke, 2006; Snow, Eadie, Connell, Dalheim, McCusker & Munro, 2014; Kirkland & Patterson, 2005; Lennox, Westerveld & Trembath, 2018).
- These include students with additional needs, those for whom English is a second language, children coming from socially deprived and disadvantaged backgrounds, and beyond this, students impacted by cultural factors such as the decline in family dinner table conversations, children being quieted by dummies or technological devices, and parents engaging with their devices rather than their children (Hattie, 2014; Locke, 2006, p.14).
- **Oral language is the “single most important skill that children need for school**, to think and learn, understand and communicate, read and write, ask and answer questions, negotiate, reason and problem solve, express their thoughts and feelings, establish friendships, co-operate with others and manage their own behaviour” (Locke, 2006, p. 13).
- Oral Language is the foundation of all student learning and social interactions. It is essential for literacy learning, which underpins learning across the curriculum ... [and] critical for students’ social, emotional and academic wellbeing [and development]” (Cameron & Dempsey, 2016, p. 14; Locke, 2006, p.14).

# Oral Language Development and Early Literacy Experiences

- About 98% of human teaching and learning is mediated by language. (Manzo, Manzo & Thomas, 2006, p. 616). “Oral Language is the child’s first, most important, and **most frequently used medium of communication**. It is the primary means through which each individual child will be enabled to structure, to evaluate, to describe and to control his/her experience. In addition, and most significantly, oral language is the primary mediator of culture, the way in which children locate themselves in the world, and define themselves with it and within it” (Cregan, 1998, as cited in Archer, Cregan, McGough, Shiel, 2012)
- Oral language provides the **foundation for learning to read** and is related to overall reading achievement throughout primary and secondary schooling (Snow et al., 1995; Wise et al, 2007).
- Children who are surrounded by **rich and complex conversations**, have an overwhelming advantage in vocabulary development, in understanding the structures of language, and in tuning into the sounds of the English language.
- Oral language is important for both reading and writing. If young children are fortunate enough to have stories read to them, and if individual words are pointed out as the stories are read, the process by which **spoken language is transformed into written language** becomes apparent.
- **Many children enter school at a significant disadvantage** and will be further disadvantaged if this is not understood and acknowledged by their school. Their need for support is urgent and paramount



# More



There are **correlations with reading** in the middle years of primary school (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001). It is impossible to understand the written form of a language without a wide vocabulary and familiarity with language structures.

Parents are rightfully regarded as a **child's first teacher**. As parents interact with their young children, they shape the foundations of language development (NELP, 2008). Certain features of these early interactions are particularly important:

- the frequency of one-to-one or small group interactions (Morrow et al, 1998);
- the quality of language— that is, the number and variety of actual words that children hear (Fernald, Perfors & Marchman, 2006);
- the reading aloud of story books;
- and the quality of play experiences (Tomopoulos et al, 2006).

Through these experiences, children **'tune in to' the phonological system** (Dickinson et al, 2003; Goswami, 2001; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998) which supports their foundation of understanding of words for later learning about the written symbols that match those sounds – they begin to understand the alphabetic principle.

Oral language **builds children's vocabulary knowledge**. Preschool children with strong receptive vocabularies tend to have better listening comprehension, word recognition and reading comprehension in the later primary years (Scarborough, 2001). Oral language experiences prepare the child for learning to read.

Almost all **classroom-based learning depends on oral language** but “there is evidence that some teachers may have struggled to implement this component because the underlying framework was unclear to them” (NCCA, 2012, pg. 10). A suggested model for effective oral language instruction consists of five components: (Adapted from Eisenhart C. 1990)

- Promote auditory memory
- Teach and extend vocabulary and conceptual knowledge
- Develop listening and speaking skills
- Teacher variety of spoken texts
- Create a language learning environment

# Oral Language Supports a Student's

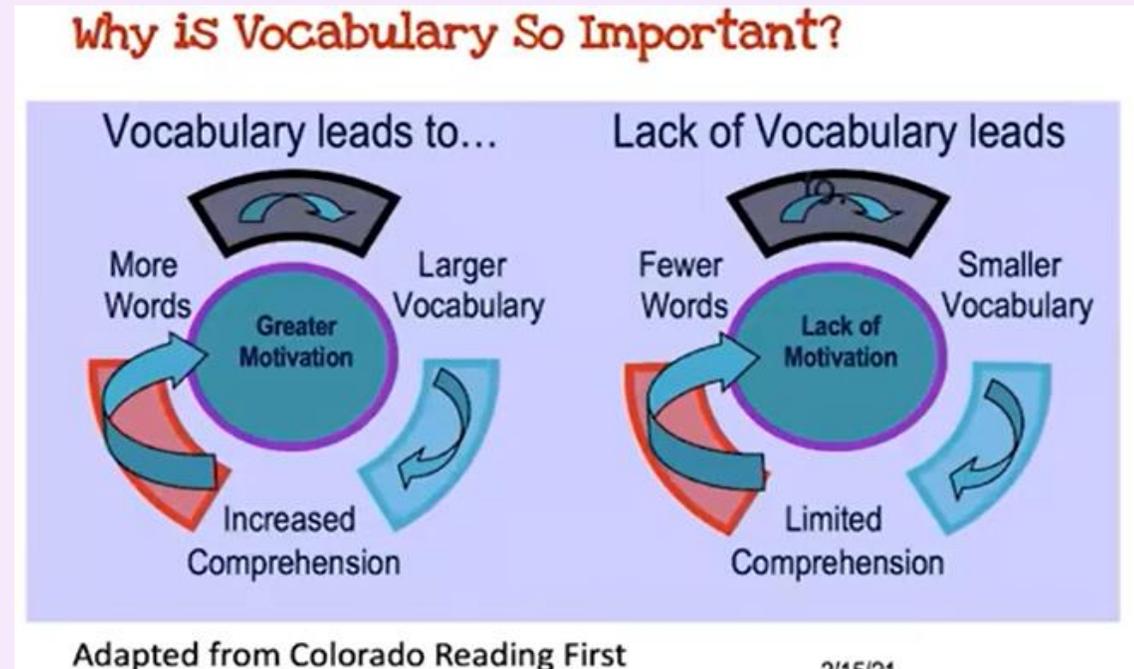
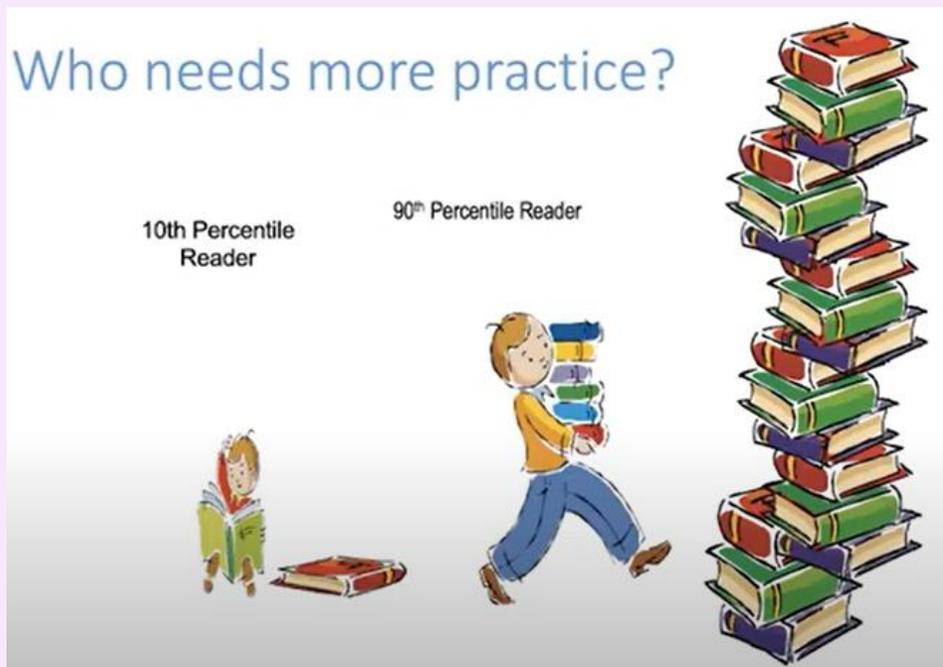


- When children have a large 'spoken' vocabulary, meaning they use and understand lots of different words, they are well placed to recognise and understand those words when they see them when reading.
- Beginning readers have a much more difficult time reading words that are not already part of their vocabulary
- Vocabulary is very important to reading comprehension - children cannot understand what they are reading without knowing what most of the words mean
- 'Knowledge of things and knowledge of the words for them grow together. If you do not know the words, you can hardly know the thing.' (Henry Hazlitt, 1916)
- A person with a scant vocabulary will almost certainly be a weak thinker. The richer and more copious one's vocabulary and the greater one's awareness of fine distinctions and subtle nuances of meaning, the more fertile and precise is likely to be one's thinking.

For children learning to read in English, oral language knowledge, with particular emphasis on vocabulary development, in preschool is crucial to word recognition (Beck et al, 2013, Foorman et al, 2016) especially for multilingual learners. The 'Vocabulary Gap' between students at school entry is impacted not only by the number of words they have been exposed to but also the quality of the conversation. Conversational turn-taking plays a role in language development and children with more opportunities for conversation develop better language skills.

**From birth to 9 years of age, we learn more words from listening.**

**From 9 years of age, for the rest of our lives we learn more words from reading.**



Phonological Patterns, *continued*

We reviewed several studies to determine the age by which at least 75% of children no longer use a given process.

Individual Process	Description	Example	Likely Age of Disappearance
Denasalization	changing a nasal consonant to a nonnasal	mat → /bæt/	2.6
Assimilation	changing a phoneme so it takes on a characteristic of another sound in the word	cat → /tæt/	3
Affrication	substituting an affricate for a nonaffricate	sheep → /tʃip/	3
Final consonant deletion	omitting a singleton consonant at the end of a word	cat → /kæ/	3
Fronting of initial velar singles	substituting a front sound for a back sound	can → /tæn/	4
Deaffrication	replacing an affricate with a continuant or stop	chip → /sɪp/	4
Cluster reduction (without /s/)	omitting one or more consonants in a sequence of consonants	grape → /gep/	4
Depalatalization of final singles	substituting a nonpalatal for a palatal sound at the end of a word	dish → /dɪt/	4.6
Depalatalization of initial singles	substituting a nonpalatal for a palatal sound at the beginning of a word	shy → /taɪ/	5
Alveolarization	substituting an alveolar for a nonalveolar sound	chew → /tu/	5
Final consonant devoicing	substituting a voiceless final consonant for a voiced consonant	bag → /bæk/	5
Cluster reduction (with /s/)	omitting /s/ in the initial position of a cluster	step → /tɛp/	5
Labialization	replacing a nonlabial sound with a labial sound	tan → /pæn/	6
Initial voicing	substituting a voiced consonant for a voiceless consonant before a vowel	sun → /zʌn/	6
Gliding of initial liquids	substituting a /w/ or /j/ for another consonant	run → /wʌn/	7
Epenthesis	adding a sound, typically /ʌ/, between two consonants	black → /bʌlæk/	8

Data from Peña-Brooks &amp; Hegde (2007)

Speech Sounds



Data from Sander (1972)

LinguSystems

Guide to

Communication  
Milestones

2012 Edition

- CEU  
- 16 Guide  
- linguistics.com

Age	Milestones
Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes letters and letter-sound matches</li> <li>• Understands that print is read left to right and top to bottom</li> <li>• Retells simple stories</li> <li>• Begins to write letters and some words heard often</li> <li>• Begins to write stories with some readable parts with assistance</li> <li>• Tries to spell words when writing</li> </ul>
End of Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands that spoken words are made up of sounds</li> <li>• Recognizes some words by sight</li> <li>• Identifies and writes uppercase and lowercase letters</li> <li>• "Reads" a few picture books from memory</li> <li>• Prints own first and last name</li> </ul>
Beginning of First Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies an increasing number of words by sight</li> <li>• Begins to decode new words independently</li> <li>• Uses a variety of reading strategies such as rereading, predicting what will happen, asking questions, or using visual cues or pictures</li> <li>• Reads and retells familiar stories</li> <li>• Reads aloud with ease</li> <li>• Decides independently to use reading and writing for different purposes</li> <li>• Sounds out and represents major sounds in words when trying to spell</li> <li>• Tries to use some punctuation and capitalization</li> </ul>
End of First Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies letters, words, and sentences</li> <li>• Has a sight vocabulary of 100 words</li> <li>• Understands what is read</li> <li>• Creates rhyming words</li> <li>• Reads grade-level material fluently</li> <li>• Expresses ideas through writing</li> <li>• Prints clearly</li> <li>• Spells frequently-used words correctly</li> <li>• Begins sentences with capital letters and attempts to use punctuation</li> <li>• Writes a variety of stories, journal entries, or notes</li> </ul>

Age	Milestones
1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows simple spatial directions, such as <i>in</i> and <i>on</i></li> <li>• Understands <i>another</i></li> <li>• Uses simple directional terms, such as <i>up</i> and <i>down</i></li> <li>• Uses two or three prepositions, such as <i>on</i>, <i>in</i>, or <i>under</i></li> </ul>
2 – 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinguishes between <i>in</i> and <i>under</i>, <i>one</i> and <i>many</i></li> <li>• Understands number concepts of <i>one</i> and <i>two</i></li> <li>• Understands size differences, such as <i>big/little</i></li> <li>• Understands <i>in</i>, <i>off</i>, <i>on</i>, <i>under</i>, <i>out of</i>, <i>together</i>, <i>away from</i></li> <li>• Begins to understand time concepts of <i>soon</i>, <i>later</i>, <i>wait</i></li> <li>• Selects three that are <i>the same</i> from a set of four objects</li> <li>• Selects the object that is <i>not the same</i> from four objects with three of them identical</li> <li>• Begins to use adjectives for color and size</li> </ul>
3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows quantity directions <i>empty</i>, <i>a lot</i></li> <li>• Follows equality directions <i>same</i>, <i>both</i></li> <li>• Understands <i>next to</i>, <i>beside</i>, <i>between</i></li> <li>• Identifies colors</li> <li>• Matches one-to-one</li> <li>• Points to object that is <i>different</i> from others</li> <li>• Uses position concepts <i>behind</i>, <i>in front</i>, <i>around</i></li> </ul>
4 – 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands comparative and superlative adjectives, such as <i>big</i>, <i>bigger</i>, <i>biggest</i></li> <li>• Understands time concepts <i>yesterday</i>, <i>today</i>, <i>tomorrow</i>, <i>first</i>, <i>then</i>, <i>next</i>, <i>days of the week</i>, <i>last week</i>, <i>next week</i></li> <li>• Understands <i>different</i>, <i>nearest</i>, <i>through</i>, <i>thin</i>, <i>whole</i></li> <li>• Identifies positional concepts <i>first</i>, <i>middle</i>, <i>last</i></li> </ul>
5 – 6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands opposite concepts, such as <i>big/little</i>, <i>over/under</i></li> <li>• Understands <i>left/right</i></li> <li>• Understands number concepts up to 20</li> <li>• Answers "How are things the same/different?"</li> <li>• Uses adjectives for describing</li> <li>• Uses comparative adjectives, such as <i>loud</i>, <i>louder</i></li> <li>• Uses <i>yesterday</i> and <i>tomorrow</i></li> <li>• Uses adverb concepts <i>backward</i> and <i>forward</i></li> <li>• Uses prepositions <i>through</i>, <i>nearest</i>, <i>corner</i>, <i>middle</i></li> <li>• Names ordinal numbers, such as <i>first</i>, <i>second</i>, <i>third</i></li> </ul>

## Vocabulary

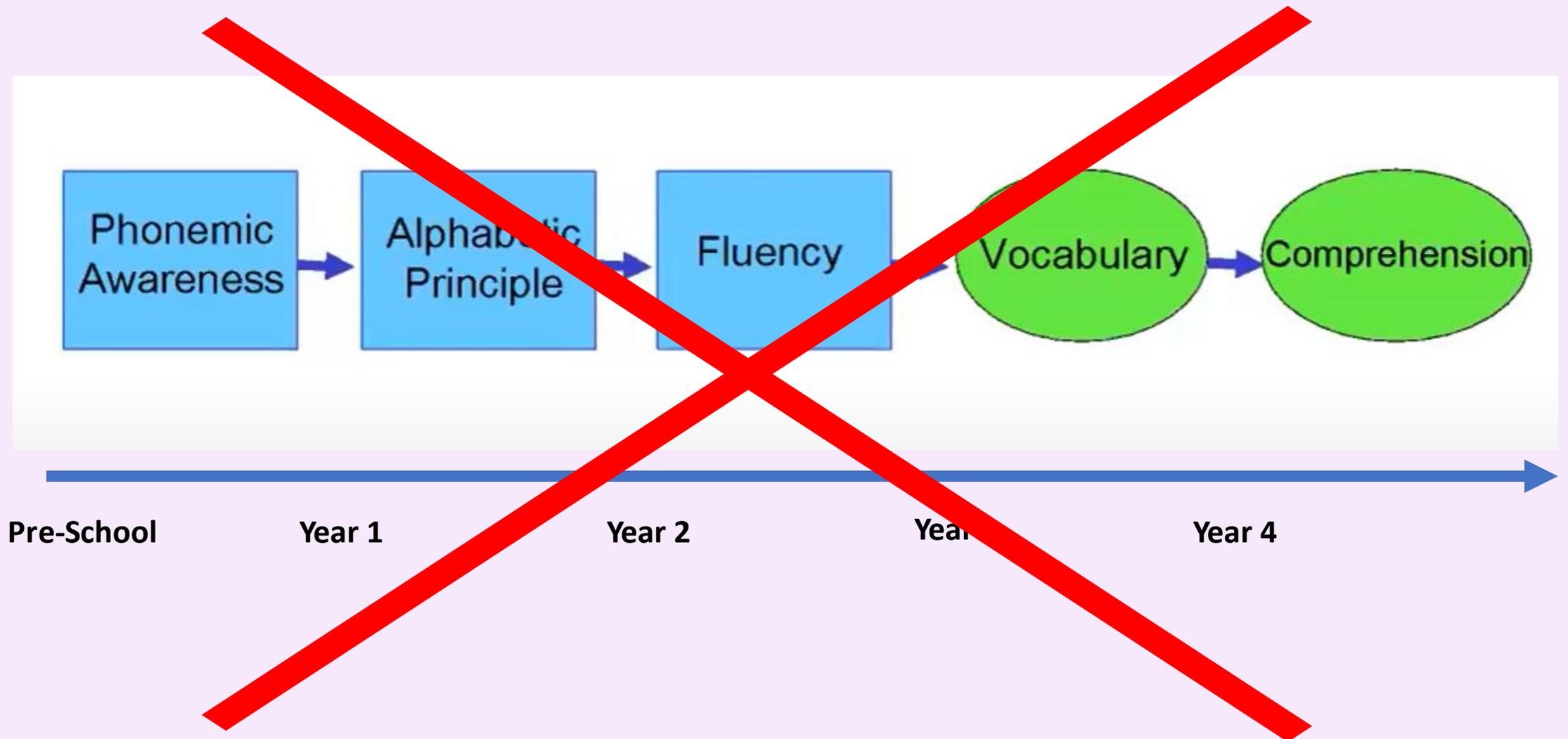
A child's expressive vocabulary grows rapidly from the time of his first word at approximately 12 months, through first grade. Vocabulary increases throughout an individual's lifetime due to education, reading, and life experiences.

Age	Approximate Words in Expressive Vocabulary
12 months	2 to 6 words other than <i>mama</i> and <i>dada</i>
15 months	10
18 months	50
24 months	200-300
30 months	450
36 months (3 years)	1,000
42 months	1,200
48 months (4 years)	1,600
54 months	1,900
60 months (5 years)	2,200-2,500
6 years	2,600-7,000
12 years	50,000

Age	Milestones
2 – 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responds to commands involving body parts, such as "Show me your foot"</li> <li>• Follows two-step directions, such as "Get your cup and bring it to me"</li> <li>• Follows directions that include action + adverb or action + adjective, such as "Walk slowly" or "Give me the red ball"</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of several verbs by selecting corresponding pictures</li> <li>• Recognizes family labels such as <i>baby</i>, <i>grandpa</i></li> </ul>
3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attends to name being called from another room</li> <li>• Understands simple <i>wh-</i> questions</li> <li>• Understands most simple questions pertaining to her activities and environment</li> <li>• Improves listening skills and begins to learn from listening</li> </ul>
4 – 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attends to a short story and answers simple questions about it</li> <li>• Hears and understands most of what is said at home and in school</li> <li>• Repeats four digits when they are given slowly</li> <li>• Readily follows simple commands involving remote objects</li> </ul>
5 – 6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeats sentences up to nine words in length</li> <li>• Follows three-step directions</li> <li>• Responds correctly to more types of sentences but may still be confused at times by more complex sentences</li> </ul>

Despite growing recognition of the critical contributions that oral language skills make to reading comprehension, difficulties with oral language comprehension may go unnoticed (Cain & Oakhill, 2007), particularly when students have comparatively strong word reading and spelling skills (Bishop & Adams, 1990)





Code Base  
Instr



Meaning  
In

# The Nest of Oral Language

Pre-School

Year 1

Year 2

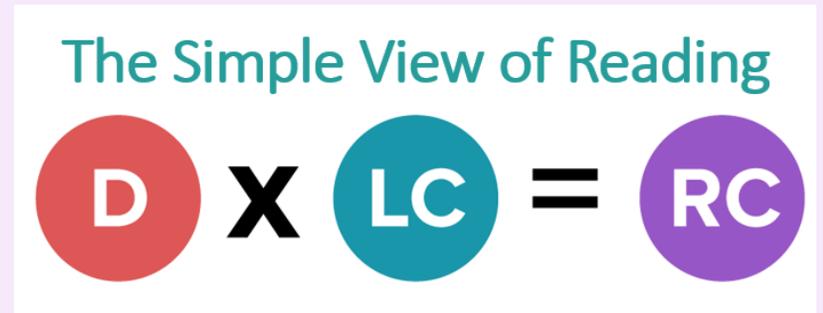
Year 3

Year 4



# Simple View of Reading

- Oral language is a **primary contributor** to successful reading comprehension so teaching through oral language activities should be a **primary focus** for teachers in the early years because these skills serve as a necessary precondition for successful comprehension.
- This is also **important for older struggling readers** as their access to vocabulary through what they're reading is limited by the relatively simple text that they can read and decode. Because their language abilities are often much more highly developed than their reading abilities, they are well positioned to learn more sophisticated content and vocabulary through oral language activities.



- **Four kinds of oral language usage and development underpin curriculum access and students' ability to learn in later years:**
- **Independent listening.** This includes the ability to listen to extended talk (such as stories, factual accounts, or presentations) and to retain the information so that it can be recalled. The kind of listening students are expected to do at school (especially where the teacher is talking to the whole class) often differs from the listening they are used to doing at home, where talk is mainly about familiar events and experiences, involving just a few people who know each other well.
- **Independent speaking.** This includes the ability to use extended talk (for example when recounting news, retelling a story, or explaining an idea) without the support of immediate feedback. Independent speaking of this kind requires learners to use increasingly precise and sophisticated language that is tailored and communicated clearly to the audience.
- **Using social language.** This is about developing conversational skills in small groups, such as greeting others, sharing stories, or offering entertainment. There are often group norms for initiating, joining and ending conversations, and introducing new topics in particular social situations that may have to be learned.
- **Applying discussion skills.** This is about the ability to interpret specific language (especially academic language) to carry out structured learning tasks. This involves students in thinking about abstract concepts, reasoning about possible and probable causes, and reflecting and talking about their own learning. Discussion skills also involve the use of focused talk in a small group for a particular purpose, generally to clarify or explore ideas, make decisions or reach consensus about the best option. During a discussion, students build knowledge and understanding, expand vocabulary, learn new ways of expressing ideas, and develop their listening and critical thinking skills.

# General Principles of Oral Language Development

Oral language skills are vital across all the school years and throughout life, BEYOND LITERACY

Oral language proficiency assists in

- establishing and maintaining personal and social relationships;
- in communicating and meeting everyday needs;
- in managing our business, recreational, health and financial affairs;
- and in optimising employment opportunities—in other words,

**every facet of our lives.**

Oral language development is not just the domain of the early childhood teacher: teachers can continue to help students become more articulate and sophisticated users of the language throughout their school years which will equip them for fuller and more rewarding participation in life.

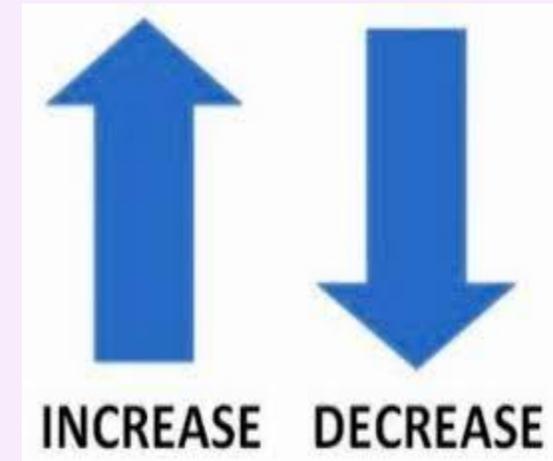
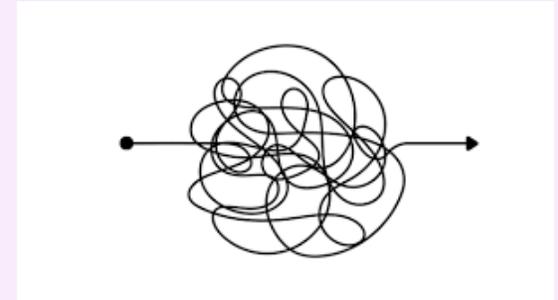




# Oral Vocabulary is the Key to Reading Comprehension

Oral language discussions develop vocabulary, critical thinking skills, and students reading comprehension. Recent research also has shown that students who have a wide oral vocabulary have more chance of making meaning from complex text (Gillon, 2017).

- For comprehension progress, the importance of decoding decreases with age, and the importance of discussion skills increases (García and Cain, 2014, cited in Hjetland et al, 2017).
- Shifting the pedagogy from decoding words to a complex discussion focused on understanding has been shown to accelerate reading comprehension progress (McNaughton, S. & Lai, M. (2012).
- Once students can decode, more emphasis needs to be placed on the discussion of the text. There is strong evidence that focused critical-thinking discussion about rich text results in improved comprehension.
- Teacher-led discussion of a complex text is one of the best places to expose students to interesting, technological, and specific words in a meaningful context (content-area literacy).
- Collaborative discussion drives accelerated progress in reading for all students, especially Māori and Pasifika students.



# Teaching Vocabulary Through Structured Literacy

- A large and growing body of research supports the effectiveness of direct and extended vocabulary instruction that is aligned with a structured literacy approach for increasing the **oral vocabulary knowledge** of students in the 'primary years'.

## *Features of direct and extended vocabulary instruction*

- Focus on teaching academic vocabulary
- Give students clear and understandable definitions
- Introduce vocabulary in supportive and meaningful contexts
- Teach vocabulary using explicit instruction
- Provide extended interactive instruction that promotes deep processing
- Give students immediate feedback that reinforces correct use of vocabulary and corrects errors
- Incorporate review of taught vocabulary over time in different meaningful contexts.

# Oral Language Development Aligns with the Values of Inclusive Education



- Inclusive Education asks schools and their systems and processes to adapt and be flexible to diversity, in order to ensure participation and learning for all students. Delivery of rich, engaging curricula that builds educational skills for students can be supported by educator's increasing knowledge of Oral Language programmes. Being skilled at supporting oral language development, and partnering with whanau and community to collaborate in this goal also serves an Inclusive Learning environment.
- Schools are largely auditory-verbal environments. We talk all the time, to different people and for different reasons. Decisions such as what vocabulary, volume, speed and prosody to use are made all the time by skilled speakers who adapt their discourse depending on their audience and their purpose (Cameron & Dempsey, 2016, p.16). Haig & Rochecouste (2005) identified four categories of discourse: planned and unplanned; formal and informal; dialogue and monologue; and public and private (as cited in Cameron & Dempsey, 2016, p. 15).
- For teachers' own understanding, one of the key concepts is that of dialogic talk, which can be defined as collective, reciprocal, supportive, purposeful, and cumulative (Alexander, 2008 as cited in Cameron & Dempsey, 2016, p. 18; van Hees, 2007). Teachers are called upon to elevate the quality of the oral language environment in their classroom by ensuring a focus on this kind of discourse and communication. Edward-Groves, Anstey and Bull (2014) note the following hallmarks of good oral language / effective dialogic teaching practices in a classroom:
  1. Teachers go beyond asking questions that can be answered by recall, to ask authentic, exploratory, probing, open questions. Teachers can question students as a way of encouraging them to develop and refine their ideas and positions.
  2. Teachers hold high expectations that students will ask questions and contribute ideas.
  3. The culture of the classroom needs to value tentativeness, risk taking and not having to always know the right answer.
  4. Teachers build on students' interests.
  5. Teachers allow pauses for thinking and for formulating answers and questions.

# Oral Language Components

# Oral Language Components

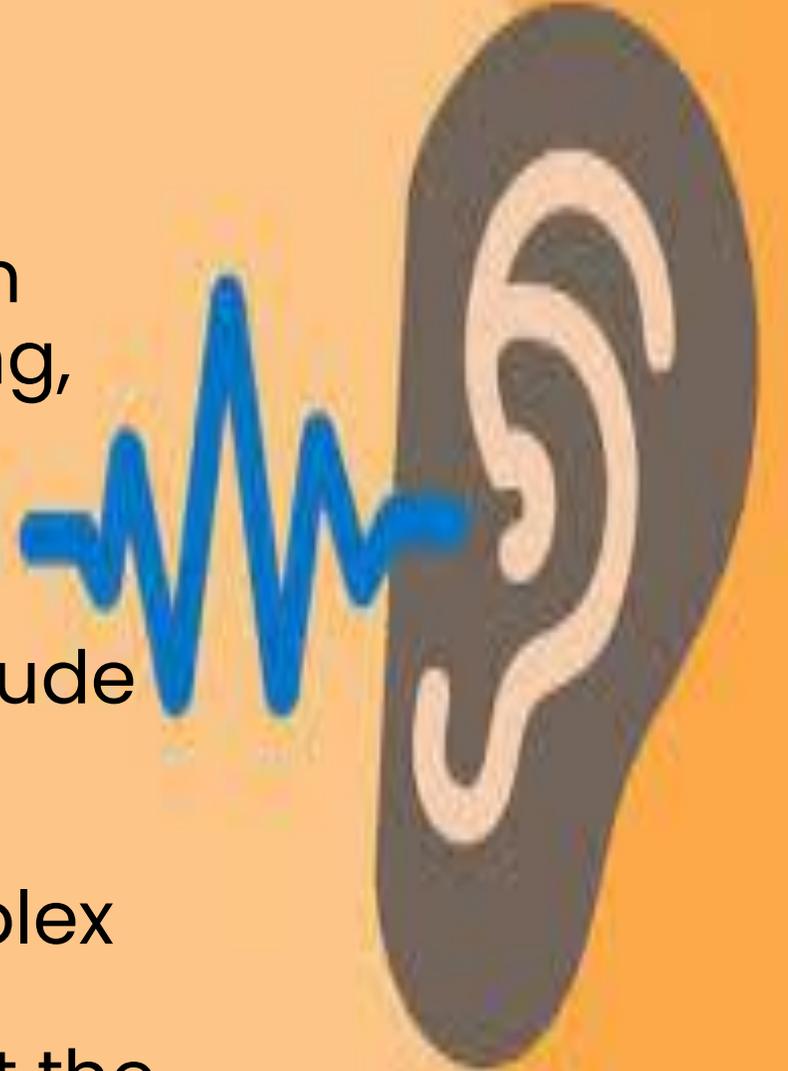
Oral language is often associated with **vocabulary as the main component**. However, oral language is comprised of much more. In the broadest definition, oral language consists of six areas:

- phonology, the sounds in language
- grammar, (syntax) the rules of language
- morphology, smallest meaningful parts of words (morphemes)
- vocabulary, (semantics) meanings of words
- Pragmatics, social rules of language.

The acquisition of these skills often begins at a young age, before students begin focusing on print-based concepts such as sound-symbol correspondence and decoding. Because these skills are often developed early in life, children with limited oral language ability are typically at a distinct disadvantage by the time they enter kindergarten (Fielding et al., 2007).

# Phonology

- Phonology covers the organization or system of sounds within a language.
- Once the phonological system has been acquired for basic listening and speaking, children begin to develop phonological awareness—the awareness of words in sentences or syllables in words. Other aspects of phonological awareness include rhyme, alliteration, onset rime (word families), blending, segmenting, and manipulating sounds. At the most complex level is phonemic awareness (blending, segmenting, and manipulating words at the individual sound—or phoneme—level).



A hand in a white sleeve points to the word "GRAMMAR" written in white chalk on a green chalkboard. The word is enclosed in a hand-drawn oval.

# Grammar (Syntax)

- As children develop their oral language skills, they also develop an understanding of grammar—the set of structural rules that govern the combination of words and phrases into sentences, as well as how sentences are combined into paragraphs.
- Knowledge of these rules helps children understand the relationship among words and apply vocabulary and abstract thinking to their comprehension of oral language.

# mor·phol·o·gy

en over	<b>joy</b> "a happy feeling"	able	
		ed	
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		ful	ly
		ous	ness

- Sometimes considered to be a subset of syntax and sometimes considered as part of vocabulary (semantics), morphology is focused on the smallest units of meaning within a word, as well as the rules about how those words are formed. For example, if we were to examine the word "cats," a basic analysis would show there are four phonemes: /k/, /a/, /t/, and /s/.
- The word 'cats' has two morphemes (meaningful word parts): "Cat" is a feline animal, and "s" tells us that there is more than one cat. Morphology can also include the study of structural analysis—how words are joined together and build vocabulary by analyzing the morphological structure of the word (prefix, root, and suffix)—which then helps build upon the child's foundation in vocabulary.

# Vocabulary (Semantics)

The development of vocabulary focuses both on expressive and receptive vocabulary.

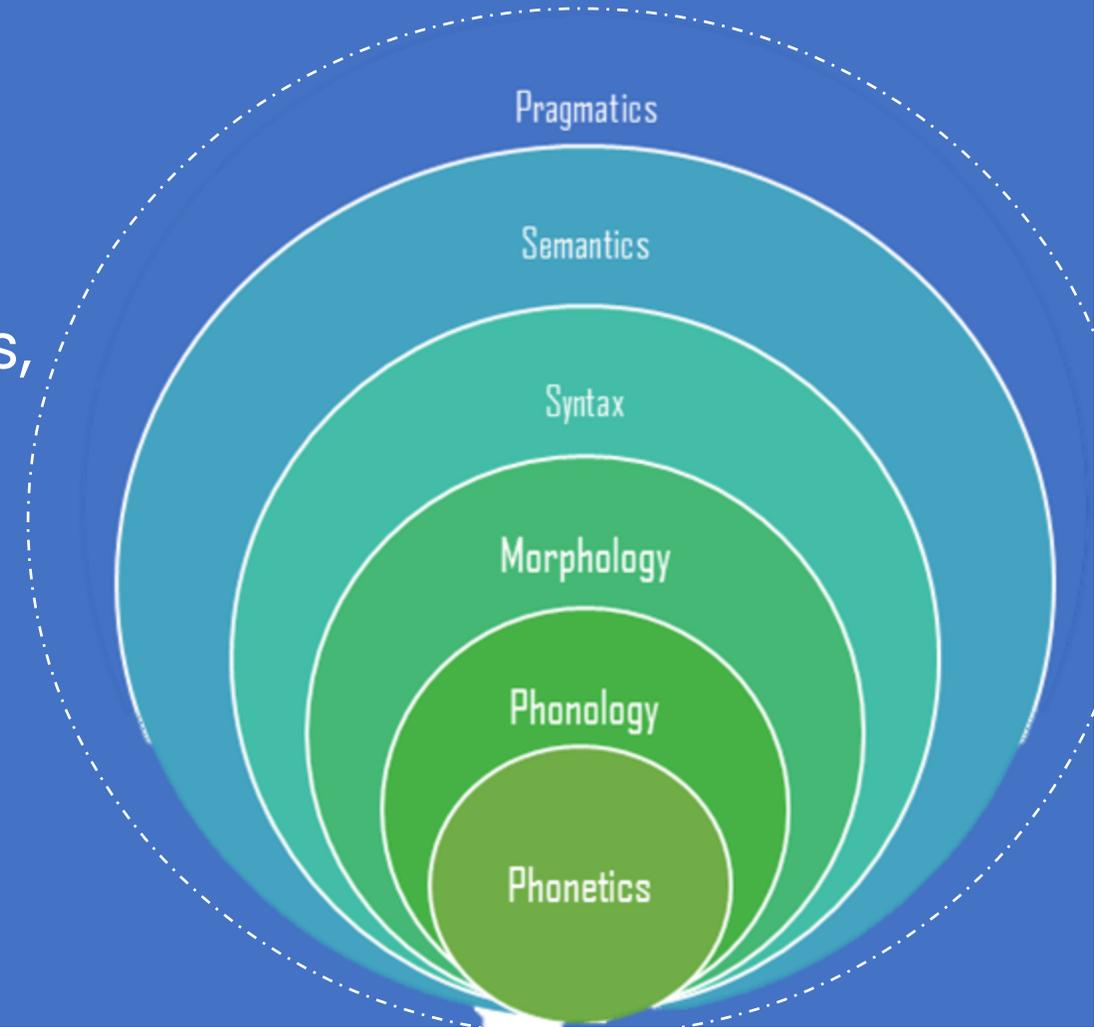
Expressive vocabulary represents the words a student actively uses when talking, writing, or otherwise communicating.

Receptive vocabulary represents the words that a student understands—based on context and background experiences—but may not necessarily use when speaking or writing.

# Pragmatics

Considered by some reading experts as the “hidden curriculum” in a classroom, pragmatics requires the understanding of the social use of language.

This includes social norms regarding conversational turn-taking, personal space, and appropriate behavior with peers and authority figures in a variety of common social situations. In some classroom settings, students lacking background experience—which can be attributable to cultural differences in some instances—don’t understand group dynamics and expectations regarding behavior. Understanding a variety of situations prepares students for more successful comprehension at later stages, including both listening and reading.



# Strategies to Support Oral Language Development

**The Link between Oral Language and Literacy**

# Focus on Early Years

## Strategies

# Oral Language in the Early Years

Five practices to consider incorporating into the early years to support the development of Oral Language

- Understanding the role of language in culture and identity
- Puppets to support oral language development
- Language learning in digital environments
- Positive, purposeful interactions
- Building vocabulary through shared experiences



# Oral Language, Culture and Identity



*Children belong first to their family, their cultural group or community, then school.*

*Teachers encourage children to build a sense of belonging and interdependence with their classmates through language interactions that demonstrate shared purpose e.g. practising personal and social skills to interact positively with others by learning to say 'Hello' to each other in home languages.*

- What do you know about the home languages that your students speak?
  - Most people have students that are speaking languages other than English at home.
  - It is important to recognise and celebrate the students' home languages so that
    - Students can engage
      - They learn how to behave
    - Students feel respected
      - They can share aspects of their culture
    - Students express their emotions
      - They respond to others
    - Students are able to persist
      - They try new things, share needs/wants, ask for help etc
- Language is intrinsic to the expression of culture. Language is a fundamental aspect of cultural identity. It is the means by which we convey our innermost self from generation to generation. (Rovira, L. 2008)

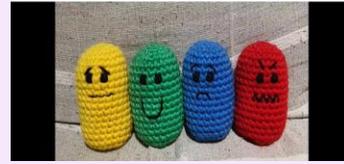
# Oral Language and Puppets

- Consider using a special teacher puppet
- They are a valuable means of promoting oral language and confidence. When puppets are incorporated into learning, children retain knowledge more effectively. Children communicate naturally with puppets and gain confidence in expressing themselves.
- Children can practice language and vocabulary skills using puppets.
- For shy children, puppets can be a starting point of expression as they may feel more comfortable expressing themselves through the puppet.
- It all becomes fun when a puppet is brought into the picture.

Give me a hand: Using puppets in your classroom

Posted on August 31, 2016 by Kaila Weingarten





## Different types of puppets.

- **Feelings puppets** allow children to delve into the emotions of others as well as themselves. This is empowering as well as educating. They're great for the development of language and vocabulary, but they also encourage children to use their communications skills to verbally express what they're feeling and work through some of those emotions. They can express their feelings in a way that's safe for everyone. This supports neurodiverse learners as well.
- **Animal puppets** are more open ended. Children can be more creative about what that puppets role might be. Language develops in social play using puppets for role play and for bringing story telling to life. Role play helps children develop language and communication skills and promotes creativity and imagination. They encourage children to become more confident and develop a stronger sense of identity.
- **Sock puppets** are even more open ended because they can take on a variety of roles and genders, they can be people or animals, developing language and communication skills, negotiation and cooperation, etc.
- **Scripted puppets** (play) have specific roles and sit within scenarios that might involve role, conflict, resolution, theme, dialogue. This might be an ongoing conversation between the characters or a narration that describes what they are doing. Puppet plays often use repetitive phrases that the children can anticipate and repeat.

## Social Development: Puppets can

- Increase children's communication and social skills by providing structured opportunities to interact with the puppet.
- Children can practise these skills by using puppets to interact with other children.
- Children can learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect e.g. stroking it, cuddling it, patting it's head etc.
- Children who are reluctant to speak out or try new words/phrases develop confidence by talking to the puppet because the focus is on the puppet, not the child or the speaker.
- They can help students feel safe, secure and supported. It doesn't matter if the puppet makes a mistake.

## Emotional Development:

- Puppets give children a friend to talk to or a way to talk to other children without having to speak directly to them
- They can provide the support for children to seek out and accept new challenges and celebrate achievements of themselves and others.
- They can help children to increasingly cooperate and work collaboratively with others.
- The puppet can model new behaviours for children to practice
- They allow children to enjoy moments of solitude.

## Cognitive development

- Puppets can be a great tool to grab the attention of students if it has an engaging personality.
- Can be beneficial to have a puppet that only the teacher uses, that belongs to the teacher and is there to help teach
- They can help children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, enthusiasm, imagination and flexible thinking.
- Don't worry if your ventriloquism skills aren't great – the children won't pay any attention to you. Their eyes will be on the puppet
- Puppets with moving mouths are especially good in language lessons
- Make sure your puppet uses eye contact with who it is speaking with.

**Caution:** Make sure students don't see the puppet 'dead'. Make sure if it lives in a cupboard or a box, that it goes away and comes out 'animated'. Don't leave it hanging 'dead' on a hook or over your mini board. It can be upsetting for some children

# Language learning in digital environments

Multimedia stories can foster children's implicit and explicit story comprehension.

- Oral language provides a foundation for reading comprehension.
- Story comprehension is a fundamental oral language skill. It covers making inferences, identifying main ideas, monitoring, perspective taking, applying working memory capacity, and complex reasoning. Research has found that explicit and implicit story comprehension is enhanced by using multimedia enhanced story books.
- Digital storybooks (ebooks) provide a strong link between text and visuals to enhance story comprehension by making that narration more concrete.
- Multimedia stories can Foster children's implicit story comprehension and inferential thinking about the content of the story.
- Animated illustrations can help children to recall stories – Can recall more elements of the story and the length of story retellings are greater.
- E books can increase engagement and the development of our language through vocab and comprehension.
- Key features of language thinking that can be applied and adapted to the digital environment include:
  - Repetition – games and experiences where language is repeated over and over within a context
  - Visual cues – benefit language learning by aligning images with language to reinforce learning
  - Production – in which children need to not just understand but also speak and produce language
  - Collaboration – use group presence and digital play. Share devices and use them in playful scenarios so students are interacting with each other.



*Theories and Implications:*

*“Children need frequent practise, in language topics that are of interest to them. Children need interactive learning contexts with opportunities to practise in a meaningful context so they can obtain clear understanding of vocabulary and language purposeful stop the role of storytelling and play as a social context for language learning appears central for young learners, with rich connections to real world engagement facilitating meaningful learning. Links to intercultural understanding, including songs, music and familiar contexts (such as food and art) may also be beneficial*

*“Highfield, K., 2015 Language learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – is there an app for that?*

# Building Language Learning Through Digital Technology

Modelled language: Digital technology can be a great tool for modelling language, especially new language for students. It can

- capture the attention
- engage students especially with devices that allow students to move, tap and drag items and hear them while possibly seeing text at the same time
- help students build confidence because they can practice sentence structure and vocabulary in their own time and at their own pace without an adult watching
- Encourage practice and repetition in a way that the regular classroom may not, especially with apps that incorporate an element of game play.

Oral Language Production: when students speak to the tablet/device perhaps through voice to text or to make something happen. It can

- increase children's communication by providing them with context for language use and immersing them in an imaginative space.
- encourage students to produce speech especially if they need to use the microphone
- Practice oral language in a non-threatening environment (think language learning apps for adults)

Language comprehension: demonstrating an understanding of what's being said. It can

- allow students to explore text, be playful, revise text
- can use creativity to create stories. Use technology to express ideas that others can then understand.
- provide rewarding feedback – instant
- encourage collaboration.



# Oral Language Strategies Across Years

# Create a Language Learning Environment

- It is important that the classroom environment is supportive and nurturing where a variety of communication styles are valued, accepted and accommodated.
- Teachers can design differentiated teaching and learning activities that draw on pupil's interests, knowledge and skills.
- Teachers can also support students by helping them to develop strategies to use when speaking and listening for different contexts.
- By providing authentic purposes and audiences for speaking and listening, pupils will become confident and enthusiastic communicators.
- A language learning environment can be created by focusing on three key elements:

Element	Definition
The physical environment	By enriching the physical environment of the classroom, multiple opportunities for engaging oral interaction and development will exist. Suggestions for a rich physical environment are listed below.
Classroom culture	By enriching the physical environment of the classroom we create multiple opportunities for engaging oral interaction and development. Suggestions for creating a classroom culture that facilitates oral instruction are listed below.
Opportunities for communication	Communication happens all the time in the classroom. By taking advantage of certain communication opportunities, students can be exposed to multiple oral language contexts and uses. Suggestions for valuable opportunities for communication that can be harnessed are listed below.



# Developing the Physical Environment

- Table/display board to display objects of personal interest/topic related resources
- Dress-up boxes as this allows pupils to engage in spontaneous role play, to re-tell experiences, and experiment with new ideas and vocabulary
- Collection of puppets to encourage re-telling favourite stories
- Creative area (toys, dress-up clothes, creative equipment)
- Rug area for instruction and whole group activities
- Library for children's books. Perhaps include a special place for books the children have created so they can be re-read
- Listening corner with audiobooks, this provides another opportunity for pupils to listen to a variety of audio recordings
- Telephones and message pads to practice conversational and inquiry skills
- Table for students to display objects of personal interest, work samples of topic related resources
- Hand-held dictaphones to enable students to record speaking to share with others. The recordings could also help in self-assessment on performance and setting personal goals
- Display of songs, poems and chants that have been taught in class. Encourage students to recite them for other people, practicing the patterns and rhythms of language

Note: Involve pupils in developing classroom displays that showcase their case, illustrate new concepts or support their learning of new skills. Encourage pupils to explain or describe these displays to visitors



# Developing the Classroom Culture with Oral Language

- Create a classroom culture of “have a go”
- Be sensitive to cultural differences
- Emphasise enjoyment for all
- Value social talk and the use of language used in the home
- Seize the moment if something unusual in the school happens or if a child brings something to school
- Encourage all attempts by the children at both speaking and listening
- Teach pupils to share classroom responsibilities e.g. change the calendar, set up writing table, organize the library
- Maintain an emphasis on enjoyment
- Provide opportunities for the children to reflect and review their speaking and/or listening
- Explicitly teach students to take turns in groups
- Communicate high expectations
- Motivate pupils to speak with all members of the class



# Developing Opportunities for Oral Discussion:

- Model good listening to the children
- Model using specific language to the children e.g. re-telling stories
- Provide role play opportunities to experiment with language
- Teach/display nursery rhymes, poems, songs, chants, raps so that children can hear and practice the structure and sounds
- Read aloud to the children every day
- Provide puppets, felt boards, toys to re-tell favourite stories
- Read a variety of text types to the children
- Invite guests into the classroom
- Model and allow the children to purposefully practice the language associated with group work and social interaction
- Teach pupils to resolve conflicts through language e.g. “The next time you should say” , “I would like to play with that ball when you have finished please”
- Read or recite poetry to the class each day



# Providing Opportunities for Social Interaction

Oral language develops through practice, but most talking in classrooms is done by the teacher. Sylva et al (2004) found that 73% of preschool children's time (in the United States) was spent without any direct teacher-child interaction. Those interactions that did take place took the form of closed questions that did not build oral language facility or literacy skills. Only 8% of children's time was spent in elaborated interactions with teachers.

Considering the increased size and complexity of older year levels, we can assume that generally the percentages are no better for older children and are probably worse.

## ***Children need time, opportunities and resources to develop oral language skills.***

Oral language develops most effectively through one-to-one conversations with a better language user who can model more sophisticated structures and vocabulary.

Creative ways to increase the contact that students have with better language users in pairs or very small groups should be a priority. This can involve students from a 'buddy class', parents or other volunteers who can engage with students on a regular basis, perhaps

- sharing a book together,
- talking about a weekend activity,
- a celebration or any event that will promote spontaneous language.

These activities also help children develop appropriate turn-taking, intonation, expression and eye contact. If older language users are not available, pair those children who need more support with better language users among their class peers for 15 minutes of table talk every day (Woodward et al, 2004). Provide material such as play dough, pictures or objects to prompt the discussion, and rotate these each day to initiate new conversations.

Incorporating as many opportunities as possible for students to engage in discussions and conversations—and equalize the talking time—is the easiest and most effective way to build oral language competence, which is the forerunner of broader literacy achievement.



# Classroom Talk and its Value for Learning

- Often students come to school with too little language to support comprehension. It is our responsibility to support their development once they reach school age.
- It is often not focused on enough and might be a missing link that if focused on, will allow students to get better results across their literacy.
- Most of our intervention work has a focus on phonics/phonemic awareness but if you have students with difficulties in both word recognition and language comprehension, we need to put focus into supporting both parts of the equation.



*Teachers need to engage all students in general classroom talk and in activities that require specific listening and talking skills. Teachers also need to be aware of and incorporate, the cultural practices and perspectives of all their students where possible. When students feel that the talk and activities in the classroom are meaningful, purposeful and meet their needs, they are likely to better engage in learning. ERO, 2017*

# Planned Vocabulary Building Through Shared Experiences



Small group interactions can

- Allow students to learn new words, particularly tier 3 or subject specific vocabulary e.g. cooking terms, art terms etc
- To provide hands-on opportunities to practise the words
- Can provide strong physical links to oral vocabulary
- Encourage conversation – easier for everyone to have a voice

Partner interactions (planned or incidental) can

- Encourage conversation as they're more relaxed
- Be playful
- Provide opportunities to talk about ideas e.g. reporting back to group esp. Tier 1 words

Whole group interactions (tends to be more teacher led). It can

- Provide structure to building vocabulary
- Give students a shared sense of purpose
- Provide opportunities to participate in oral language activities like singing and games
- Be an idea way to practice focussed language
- Help students learn about rhyming and the sounds of language

Shared Reading experiences e.g.

- Big books where students can follow the printed text while the teacher reads aloud
- Rhyme and repetitive text – students can read the predictive text
- Familiar stories – students can confidently read aloud
- Concepts of print and the reading process
- Oral discussions about the book not only through reading the text
- Shared reading can support all of the pillars within The Big Six

# Positive, Purposeful Interactions

Responsive, warm and supportive verbal interactions between teachers and students build the foundation for learning. Research indicates that the way teachers interact with children is crucial in determining how children develop over time. (Curby, T. & Brock, L. 2013). We're more likely to thrive and achieve positive learning outcomes when we feel a sense of belonging, feel valued and feel understood as an individual.

Children benefit most when teachers engage in stimulating interactions that support learning and are emotionally supportive. Interactions that help children acquire new knowledge and skills provide input to children, elicit verbal responses and reactions from them, and foster engagement in and enjoyment of learning. "Investing in our future"

(Society for Research in Child Development, 2013)

## Conversation

- Introduce new vocabulary during conversations and encourage students to ask the meaning of new words.
- Use a variety of vocabulary that is beyond what they would normally use but still 'explainable'
- Use it throughout the day
- Students who build Language skills are better able to express themselves and connect with others so model this for your students
- Expand on what children say to stimulate their children's thinking and provide a platform for continuing conversation

## Questioning:

- ask open ended questions to support children's thinking and comprehension skills
- talk with students to support language skill development. Build relationships with them to find out what they like.
- Create comfortable and supportive learning environments. Don't use a loud voice
- use collaborative learning conversations in small groups so everybody has a voice
- Have reciprocal, or back and forth conversations with children about things that interest them in order to keep them engaged and to provide learning opportunities



Teaching from the Heart

Kind words can be short and easy to speak  
but their echoes are endless."  
Mother Theresa



# Descriptive commenting



Descriptive Commenting is about entering the child's internal world by simply describing and narrating what they are doing. This can be likened to a commentary team at a football match. We position ourselves as an "appreciative audience", modelling and coaching the language associated with learning, persistence, feelings and social skills.

Examples:

- *"The big teddy is sitting under the chair. The small teddy is on top of the chair"*.
- *"I like how you're looking so carefully and taking your time to think about where the next piece of the puzzle goes"*.
- *"I'm going to wait until you're finished and then I'm going to have a turn"*.
- *"I think you're feeling worried about this. It's something different from what we normally do and change can be hard at first. That's why you're finding it hard to focus right now"*.

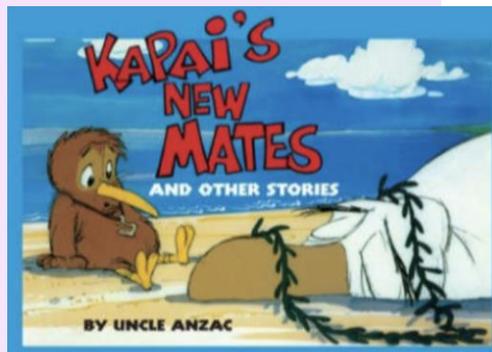
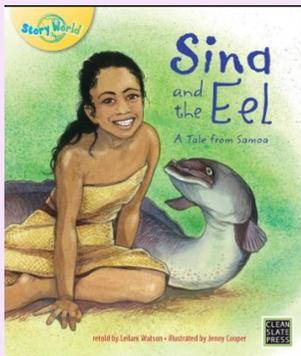
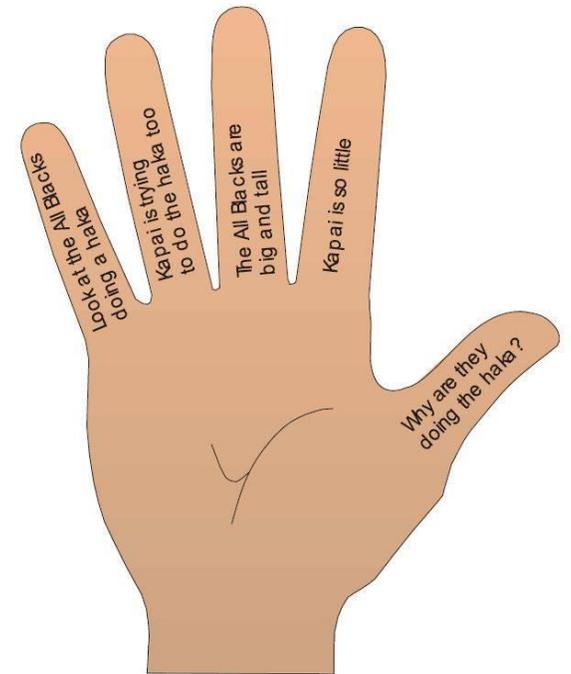


# Hei Awhiawhi Tamariki ki te Panui Pukapuka (HPP) / One hand Approach

- Language develops in children when you give them lots of information to think and talk about.
- Your hand can remind you to give four lots of information before asking a question.
- For each picture in the book, the teacher/tutor thinks of four statements they could make (four fingers) and one related question they could ask (the crucial thumb).

Information can be about:

- Names/Labels
- Size
- Colour
- Shape
- Function
- Location
- Inferencing



# High Impact Words (Tier Two Words)

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Description	Basic words that most children know before entering school	Words that appear frequently in texts and for which students already have conceptual understanding	Uncommon words that are typically associated with a specific domain
Examples	clock, cold, happy	avoid, fortunate, adapt	entomologist, peninsula, bucolic

(Beck, McKeown, & Kucan)

Tier 2 words should be the focus of direct instruction, as these are the words that will be most useful across multiple contexts and that children are less likely to learn without assistance.

## Ten Dollar Words

Rename your classroom helpers:

- Messenger = **courier**
- Pet care = **zoologist**
- Plant care = **botanist**
- Weather reporter = **meteorologist**
- Welcome team = **greeters, salutation team, appreciation team**
- Clean up = **classroom organization team**
- Line leader = **procession organizer, coordinator**

Line up at the door....how else can you say that?

- Please form a queue at the front portal
- Please move in a linear fashion to the door.
- What else do you say every day?

Adapted from the work of Nancy Hennessy (c) Judi Odson 2021

## Interesting Vocabulary Facts!

*A few thousand words account for 90 per cent of the spoken vocabulary anyone uses or hears on a regular basis! (Hayes and Ahrens 1988)*

*A highly educated adult has a listening/speaking vocabulary of about 10,000 words but likely knows nearly 100,000 words in reading and writing (Byrnes and Wasik 2009).*

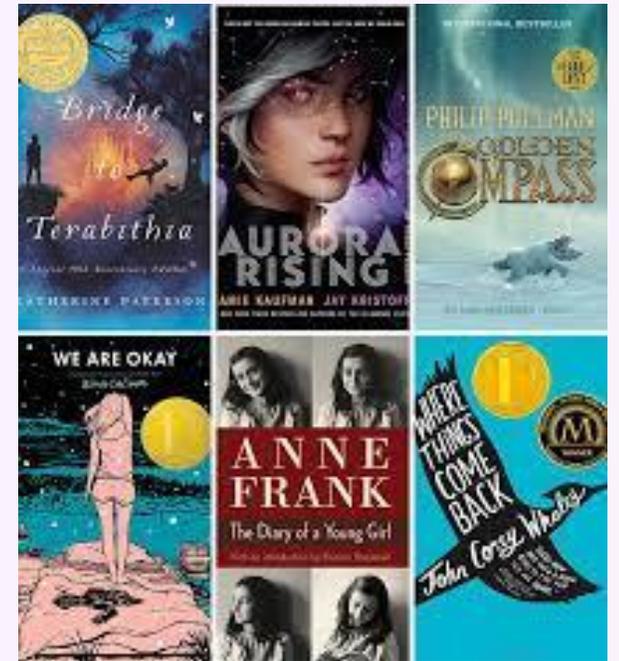
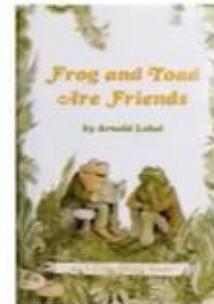
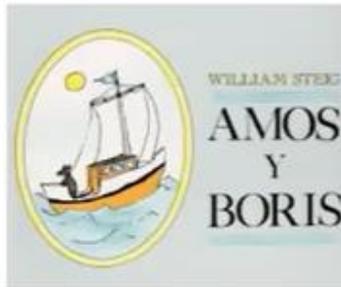
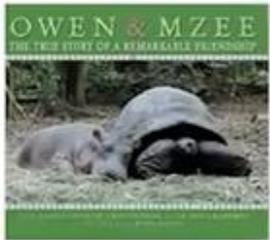
*It has been found that by the age of three, children from lower income families know 600 fewer words than children of the same age from families with higher incomes (Hart and Risley, 1995) In order for children to become proficient readers, they need to learn five to six new words per day, 38 words per week, 2000 new words a year, and 10,000 by the age of 6!*

# Using Texts as Prompts for OL

## 5. Create Text Sets

Choose books that use important words in context and can provide higher level language exposure.

- Narrative
- Narrative non-fiction
- Informational
- Picture books to help build mental model for words chosen for study



- <https://jenniferfindley.com/read-alouds-teach-theme-mentor-texts/>
- <https://pernillesripp.com/2015/10/03/great-picture-books-to-teach-theme/>
- <https://www.ozlitteacher.com.au/2020/10/18/10-books-to-teach-friendship-kindness-and-gratitude/>
- <https://the-teacher-next-door.com/mentor-texts-for-teaching-courage/>
- <https://sccl.bibliocommons.com/list/share/71512876/1663449059>
- <https://childhood101.com/picture-books-words-word-play-vocabulary/>



# Exploring Books Together

Reading stories (narrative texts) provides the perfect oral language support, providing both stimulation and motivation. Sharing a book encompasses much more than simply reading it. Questions about the author and the pictures can accompany questions about the actual content.

Open-ended questions like ‘What do you think is going to happen now?’ and ‘Why do you think she did that?’ encourage language and broader cognitive development.

Retelling activities draws on memory and logical reasoning, and builds sequencing skills, practice of different tenses, and use of time-related connecting words.

Talking about the story or content builds world knowledge; promotes imagination; helps children draw information from different sources to make inferences; engages them in critical thinking; and develops vocabulary and understanding of language structures. It also builds positive attitudes towards reading as an enjoyable and valuable activity (Tamis-LeMonda & Rodriguez, 2009).

Picture books can also stimulate language and promote a rich discussion of ideas. Sharing books with younger children also develops essential knowledge, such as how to hold a book, turn pages and direct one’s eyes when reading. Pointing to words as the story is read builds the understanding that the print, not the picture, tells the story; that we read the left hand page before the right; that our eyes sweep from the end of one line to the next. It also builds concepts of letter, word and sentence; familiarity with letter shapes and sizes; upper and lower case; punctuation; and, eventually, such subtleties as the importance of letter orientation and order. These are critical understandings that prepare children for the complex task of reading.

Older children also benefit from having books read to them—even those who can read for themselves. Teachers can read books that expose the students to more sophisticated vocabulary and syntactic structures than students would be able to read alone, and that promote discussion about diverse and important topics that may not otherwise be raised.

# What are Resiliency Touch Points?

Brief personal encounters and connections that occur throughout the day with school personnel

From 30 seconds to five minutes in length

“These **brief intentional** minutes, when consistently shared by a variety of ‘caring adults’ can lessen the feelings of despair and hopelessness of students who are bringing their significant adversity and trauma into our schools.”

- Perry & Daniels, 2016; SAMSHA, 2015)
- Implementing Trauma—Informed Practices in the School Setting: A Pilot Study;

## What Should You Know Before Doing the Activity?

### The 30 Second Conversation

- Choose students who have weak oral language skills and/or have emotional needs for connection.
- Take 30 seconds each day to engage them in authentic conversation.
- Notice changes in their responsiveness.
- Make time every day for authentic conversation

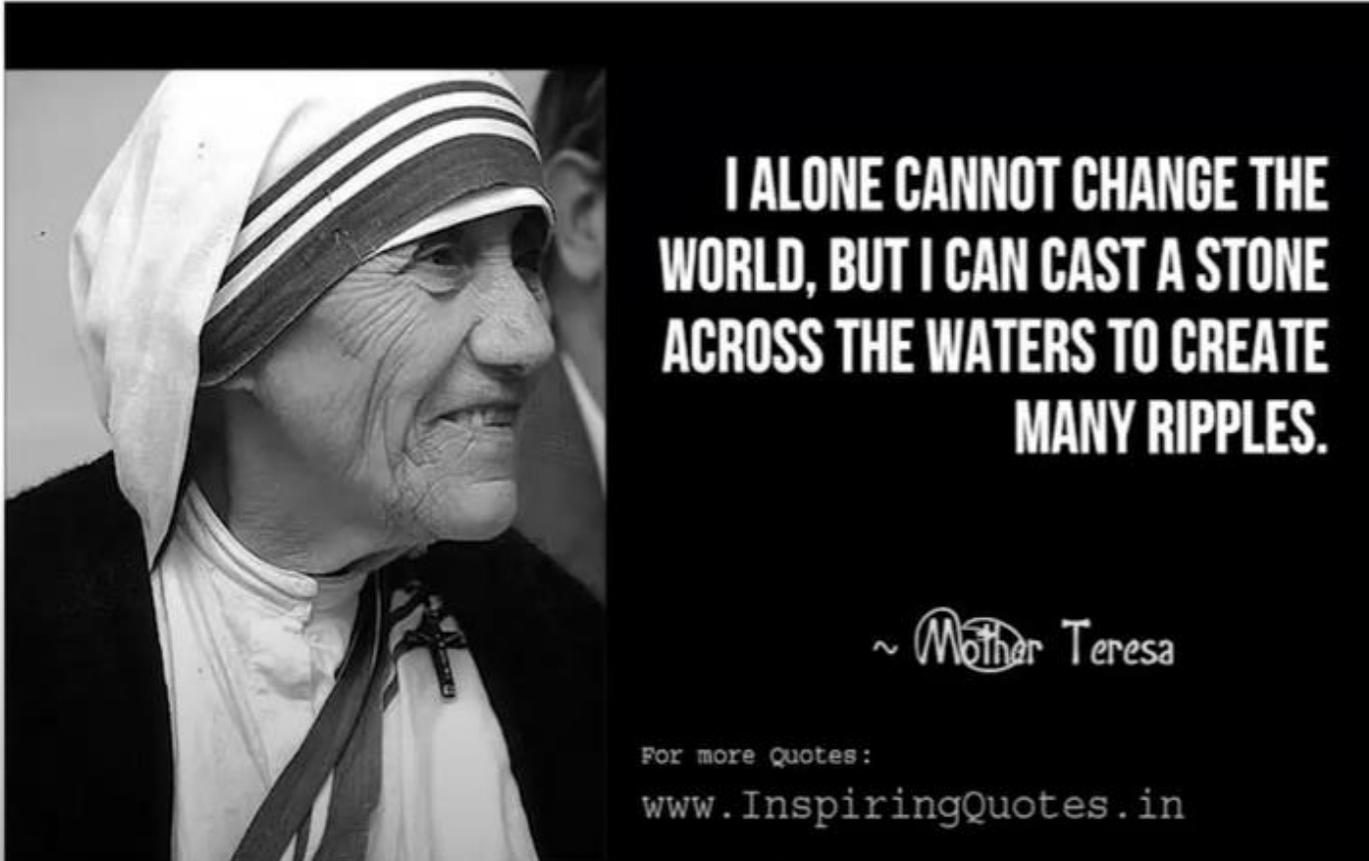


## How Can I Create these Touch Points?

- Connection with people the student trusts, who see and notice their strengths, interests, passions, and challenges.
  - **Listening** – to the student to learn about his life
  - **Questioning** – asking about how things are going, his interests, challenges etc.
  - **Observing** – something new about the student (hair, sneakers, work, smile).

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# Heroic Conversations: Collaborative Conversations about Important Ideas



Sajel Bellon • TEDxWLUBrantford

Like (66) Share Add

The Power of HEROIC Conversations: Cultivating  
human connection & healthy cultures

**P4CNZ** Philosophy  
for Children  
New Zealand  
*Rapunga Whakaaro mō nga Tamariki*

# Conversation cards

## EXAMPLE LIST OF CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What is the most beautiful place you have been?
- What is your favorite season? Why?
- If you had to change your name, what would your new name be?
- What is something that really annoys you?
- What is your biggest fear? Why?
- What is the best gift you have ever been given?
- If you opened a restaurant, what kind of food would you serve?
- What is your favorite holiday? Why?
- If you could live anywhere, where would you live?
- What was the last book you read?
- Describe yourself in two words.
- How much time do you spend on the internet? What do you usually do?
- What is your favorite dessert?
- What is one goal you have for the year?
- Would you rather go back in time or go to the future?
- Would you rather go to the beach or the mountains?
- If you could invent something, what would it be?
- What is one of the most important things you've learned?
- What is one thing you can't leave home without?
- What is one thing that you are really good at?
- What is the best vacation you have ever been on?
- What is your favorite thing to do to relax?
- What is your earliest memory?

- Would you rather live in a house, on a boat, or in space?
- Would you rather stay up late or go to bed early?
- What is your favorite thing to do with your family?
- If you had intro music, what song would it be? Why?
- What word or saying from the past do you think should come back?
- What is the best room in your house? Why?
- What is a TV series you enjoy?
- What is your favorite flavor of ice cream
- If you could live anywhere in the world where would it be?
- What is your favorite TV Show or favorite movie?
- Do you have something you would consider a guilty pleasure?
- What is one food that you could eat every day for the rest of your life?
- Name one thing you have on your bucket list.
- What is your favorite sport to watch or to play?
- What is your favorite restaurant in your home town?
- If you could get rid of one social media platform, what would it be?
- <https://childhood101.com/printable-conversation-cards/>
- <https://hip2save.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Binder1.pdf>
- <https://www.thirtyhandmadedays.com/table-talk-dinner-conversation-starters/>
- <https://www.thirtyhandmadedays.com/guidelines-for-manners-to-teach-kids/>
- <https://assets.dropbox.com/documents/en-us/creative-conversation-cards.pdf>
- <https://mentalhealth.org.nz/resources/resource/conversation-cards>



# Speaking and Listening Skills

# What needs to be taught for speaking and listening skills?

- Awareness of broad rules that govern social interaction:
  - Turn taking
    - Recognise pauses for questions , new directions or interruptions
    - Allowing others to go first
  - Holding the floor (the speaker)
    - Who holds the floor?
    - How do we use eye contact, body language, gestures and pauses?

Adjacent Pairs: Two side-by-side utterances by two different speakers for social interactions  
e.g.

- Question and answer
- Greeting and response
- Repair
  - Checking for meaning
  - checking others understand you



# Speaking and Listening Skills:

## Developing Listening Skills

- listening is arguably the most important skill used for obtaining comprehensible input in one's first language and in any subsequent languages. It is a pervasive communicate if eventful stop we listen considerably more than we read, write or speak.” (LeLoup and Pontero, 2007)
- To teach listing skills, teachers need to
  - explicitly model how to be good listeners
  - Schedule quiet, listening opportunities as part of the school day
  - provide spaces in the classroom that encourage conversation and attentive listening EG ‘The Shop’ or ‘The Doctor’s’

### Possible ways of achieving this include:

- ✓ Give simple instructions and directions during all learning activities
- ✓ Ask relevant questions
- ✓ Read stories aloud to the children and encourage them to re-tell the story in sequence
- ✓ Encourage note-taking using frameworks
- ✓ Use dictation drills
- ✓ Play games
- ✓ Use taped stories and questions
- ✓ Gather information
- ✓ Complete cloze type activities or unfinished sentences or stories
- ✓ Conduct Interviews
- ✓ Base topic work on content of radio programmes
- ✓ Sequence sentences, ideas and stories
- ✓ Listen to songs, poetry and music
- ✓ Use instructional exercises

# Teach Active Listening

Listening is a core component of oral language. Some students can hear, but are not active listeners.

Active listening requires

- selective and sustained attention,
- working memory,
- cognitive processing,
- and information storage and recall mechanisms.

Teachers can help students develop these skills by giving them tasks, such as

- Listening for specific or key information;
- Listening to answer specific questions;
- Listening to follow instructions (treasure hunts!)
- Barrier games and story grammar activities require active listening.
- For older students, teaching note-taking skills from oral input also develops listening skills.



# Speaking and Listening Skills: Developing Speaking Skills

- explicitly model effective speaking in a formal and informal manner
- provide opportunities for students to engage in conversational-style speaking e.g. using the shop area (junior school), providing scenario cards
- give students tasks that involve observing and recording effective speaking
- use role-playing to teach and reinforce good conversational skills
- carry out activities where the whole class read aloud
- teach the rules that govern social interaction
- create organic charts to capture the mannerisms associated with effective speaking such as the non-verbal behaviours



# Activity to develop Speaking and Listening Skills: People I Talk To, People I Listen To (Junior School)

- This activity provides pupils with an opportunity to discuss the different purposes for speaking and listening. Teachers can draw on contexts inside and outside the classroom. Use a variety of photographs or pictures of people that the pupils meet or interact with on a daily and weekly basis.

1. Choose a picture and discuss using the following questions, when do we talk to ...? What do we talk about with....? How do we speak when we talk to....?

2. Repeat with other pictures emphasising choices that are made according to topics that may be discussed or the purpose of the speaking.



# Activities to Develop Speaking and Listening skills:

## Act It Out 'Scenario Cards'

This is a small group activity designed to give pupils time to decide what they would do in different situations. It provides them with the opportunity to discuss the information they need to include and to try to find ways of improving their speaking and listening.

1. At the table pick a scenario card and discuss these questions, what is happening? How do we know? What will we say and do so that everybody knows what we mean? How can we say this so that it sounds like the talk we use in school? What will we do to show that we understand what is being said?
2. You need to decide who will act out the part and where the action will start, before, during or after the event on the card.
3. Try acting it out.
4. Students can then reflect on these questions, what made sense and why? where else could we listen like this?, where else could we speak like this? What would we say differently next time and why?

Suggested Scenario Cards	
Mary is throwing blocks	Oops you have knocked over a carton of milk
John has taken Bill's coat by mistake	There is no towel in the bathroom

# Speaking and Listening Skills: Nonverbal Behaviours

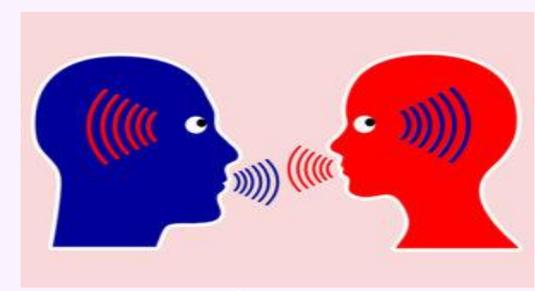
The way we use voice, facial expression and body language affects the message we're trying to give .

Create an awareness around the expressive nature of the way a person uses their body and voice to equip learners to express themselves in an effective manner.

- Use of voice: intonation and pauses to convey meaning and attitude
- volume: depending on the needs of situation, purpose, and audience e.g.
  - Loud voices for a play
  - quiet voices for the library
  - changing the voice for 'drama' and effect
  - Matching voice to the intended audience 2 support our message
- intonation:
  - downward to show that a message is complete
  - upward to indicate a question
- pitch: useful to express emotion
  - rises when we're excited
  - Lowers when we are sad
- Pauses: moments of silence between phrases
  - to separate ideas and hold attention
  - especially useful when giving formal presentations
- Pronunciation: May require particular teacher support to model words in meaningful contexts
- Proximity: the amount of personal space between people who are talking . Impacted by the relationship between them, their personalities, their culture all whether the situation as personal, social or public
- Eye contact : dependent on the relationship between the communicators come on euro development and effect on both speaker and the listener.



# Developing Speaking and Listening Skills: Pragmatic Skills



Early language learning is referred to as pragmatic knowledge (Otto, 2006) as it is purpose driven . One component of this is conversational skills which influences how well young learners can interact with others . While most children pick up this knowledge naturally, teachers may need to support children in their ability to be good conversationalists.

- General strategies can include
  - asking open-ended questions: rather than using teacher talk which is focused on giving instructions, providing information or correcting behaviour or information.
  - Wait time: Attentive body language, expanding children's responses, asking clarifying questions and using reflective listening techniques or ways to support children's continued participation in current and future dialogues (Otto 2006)
  - Model good listening and speaking techniques
  - try and position yourself at the child's eye level
  - Treat children as if they are skilled at conversation - give them your full attention and ask open ended questions to follow up
  - Speak to all children
  - Ask children questions about things to which you do not know the answer AJ asking them to reflect on a topic or formulate an opinion
  - Help children learn to listen to one another
  - Limit group time and small group discussions to a reasonable expectation of attention time
  - Value home languages including sign language
  - Rather than doing show and tell, consider show and ask IE children bring in items or objects to talk about in response to the questions that the rest of the class asked them (Jalongo, 2008)

# Activities to Develop Speaking and Listening Skills

- News/weather reports
- Show and ask
- Project shares
- Story sacks
- Puppets
- Model good story-telling
- Circle stories
- That's good; that's bad
- Varied stories (different genre read-alouds)
- Sound stories (with sound effects)
- Reader's theatre/plays
- Shared reading
- Shared poetry
- Who am I game (Headbands)
- Songs
- Debates
- Brainstorms
- Continuum/4 corners: agree, strongly agree, disagree, strongly disagree – then justify
- Emotions cards
- Social emotional decks



- Role plays
- Think-pair-share
- Partner discussions
- Giving and accepting feedback WWW (what went well) EBI (even better if...)
- Conversations stations (prompts)
- Response to prompt: evaluate, justify etc Brick by Brick
- Developmental play activities
- Jigsaws
- Cooperative learning approaches
- Games
- Conversation scenarios (situations on cards)
- Questioning and interviews
- Feely bag: - describe without looking
- Recorded news reels, speeches, movie excerpts
- Hot seat – taking the role of a character
- Barrier games (see next slide)
- Blindfolded instructions – is this the way
- Blooms questions (see next slide)

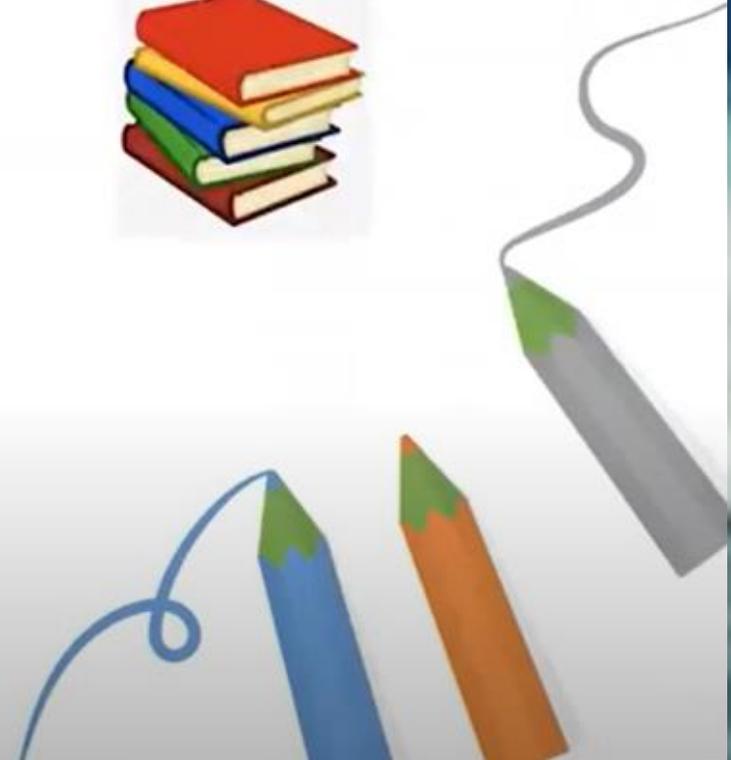
# Waves of Words

- Wash your students in words – adapted from Steven Stahl

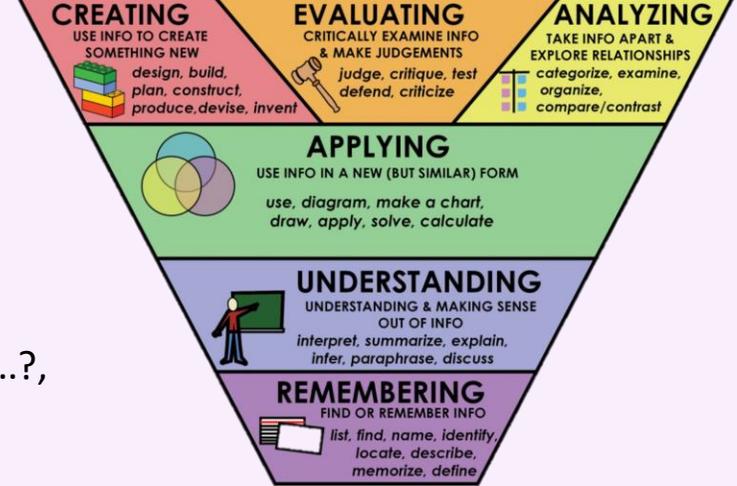
## What you Need to Know About Waves of Words:

- ✓ **One Teacher**
- ✓ **One Class**
- ✓ **Good Books**

- Read 3 books a day, every day and you will wash your children in words and create a 600 book kid!
- Do it again in first grade
- By the middle of the year you will have created a 1000 book kid!
- Notice, this activity supports student understanding and engagement in oral language.



# Using Blooms Taxonomy to Support Oral Language - Questioning



**Knowledge (recall):** Tell, list, define, name, when, where, state, identify ...

- Who?, What?, When?, Where?, How?, What happened next?, How many?, What is the name of ...?, Which is true or false?

**Comprehension (understanding):** Retell, summarise, describe, explain, predict, restate, estimate ...

- What is meant by?, How would you describe?, What is the difference?, Can you tell me in your own words?, What is the main idea?, What do you think will happen next? What is the main idea?, Why did ...?, Tell me about the \_\_\_\_'s size and shape., Can you provide an example of ...?

**Application (solving):** Solve, use, construct, classify, examine, illustrate, modify ...

- What would happen if ...?, How would you ...?, How might you use this?, What information would you need to ....?, In what other way can these be sorted?, Can you draw a diagram of what you see?, What would you do next time?, If you had to... what would you do?, Why is .... significant? Devise a set of instructions for ..., Where have you seen something like this before?

**Analysis (reasoning):** Analyse, compare, distinguish, examine, order, categorise, infer, investigate ...

- Which were facts and which were opinions?, What was the purpose of ...?, What are the parts?, What might have happened if ...?, What do you see as other possible outcomes?, What were the causes of...?, What were the effects of ...?, How are these the same?, What is the difference between ...?

**Synthesis (creating):** Create, design, formulate, invent, imagine, devise, combine ...

How can these be combined?, What conclusions are you making?, Can you design a ... to ...?, Can you see a possible solution?, Can you develop a proposal which ..., What other ideas do you have for ...?, How could this process be rearranged?, What is your plan for accomplishing this task?, How can you use what you learned?, Why not compose ....?

**Evaluation (judging):** Check, choose, prioritise, critique, hypothesise, judge, debate ...

How could this be improved?, How would you rank order?, What is the most important?, Justify your opinion .../how did you make your decision...?, Which is better? Best?, What is your top priority?, What criteria did you use?

# Teach a Variety of Spoken Texts

Function	Used For	Demands language of
Instrumental	expressing needs/ getting things done	asking, requesting, explaining
Regulatory	influencing the behaviour, feelings/ attitudes of others	sitting tasks, managing, negotiating, instructing, directing, controlling
Interactional	getting along with others	initiating, sympathising, reconciling, arguing, encouraging, empathising
Personal	expressing individuality and personal feelings	stating opinions, confronting, expressing thoughts and feelings, recounting experience
Heuristic	seeking and learning about the social and physical environment	interrogating, discussing, asking, querying, investigating, clarifying
Imaginary	creating stories, games, new worlds and new texts	storytelling, anticipating, predicting, imagining, playing, experimenting
Representational	communicating information	telling, lecturing, stating facts, sharing skills, commenting, imparting knowledge, informing

Many theorists claim that the different purposes for which we use language fall under various categories. 7  
Functions of Language (Halliday's Functions of Language 1972)

# Barrier Games



It is very important that students have the opportunity to both ask questions as well as answer questions. When activities are teacher-centered, students often only have the chance to answer questions.

By setting up communication activities like barrier games, students have the opportunity to speak and listen in pairs, rather than risk making mistakes in front of the whole class.

Barrier games are simple interactive activities where children are not allowed to see what other players are doing and have to speak and listen clearly to complete a task.

The games help children learn how to give clear instructions and descriptions, listen well and ask good questions for clarification. Groupings can be varied with one person giving instructions to a group or whole class, or two teams, pairs or individuals positioned across a barrier from each other.

The barrier can be a large piece of card, an A3 landscape ring binder file, etc. Rather than use a barrier, children can sit back to back with a partner.

Procedure: In a barrier game, students work in pairs to complete an information gap activity. Usually, one student has a complete map, drawing, table or graph, and the other has just the outline with some information filled in. The students have a piece of cardboard or a folder between them, so that the student with the incomplete map cannot see the completed example. The student with the complete map tells the other student where to place things on his or her map. The student with the incomplete map can ask questions to help place things as precisely as possible.

# Barrier Games - Types



1. **Sequencing or pattern making**: In pairs children describe successive items in an array or sequence such as bead threading, attribute blocks or toys to their partner and they complete a similar pattern.
2. **Matching pairs**: Students take turns to describe pictures or objects. One person describes the picture/object until the other child locates the matching picture/object.
3. **Assembly**: Assemble a picture from a selection of shapes. One player describes the picture and the other assembles the shapes to make the picture.
4. **Construction**: One player describes the steps in building a construction and the other player follows the steps in creating the structure.
5. **Location**: Students place items in relation to each other on a picture board. One student describes the objects location on the board and the other player listens, follows directions and places the items in the same location.
6. **Grids**: One student describes the location of an object on a grid. The other child listens and places their object in the same section of the grid.
7. **Mapping**: One Student describes how to get from one point on a map to another. The other child listens and draws the route on a corresponding map.
8. **Spot the difference**: Give pairs of students several pictures that vary in small details. The students describe their pictures to one another and identify the differences.

- Crosswords: one player has the down answers and the other the across answers. Players ask each other for hints to complete the missing part of their crossword – these may be word meanings, a cloze sentence or a phonic clue.
- Picture completion – both players have a background scene and a set of pictures to complete a relevant picture. A barrier is placed between the two players. One player places the pictures and describes their position to the other player, whose task is to place them in the identical position.
- Finding the way: Both partners have identical maps but one has a route marked, which must be described to the other player. This works well on a simple grid too
- Matching pairs: The two players have a matching set of cards. One describes a card while the other locates the identical card. Players take turns until all cards are matched. This can be made easier by having very different cards; or harder by having cards that differ in only small ways, such as faces with different expressions.
- Careful reading cards - you may be focusing on word-final consonants. Your cards could have little lists (one per card) like: hot hog hop; hot hop hop; hop hot hot. One player reads the list on his card (hot hot hop) and the other player finds his matching card.
- Make a caterpillar with different coloured body parts, and about a dozen food items (some were the same as those in The Hungry Caterpillar) Children take turns at relaying instruction e.g. Put your apple on the orange part of the caterpillar.
- Funny faces. Provide each child with a sheet of paper with ovals on it. One child makes a face using the stamps and describes what they are doing. The other tries to make the same face. Variation – make cards showing different faces in advance, and have one child describe them for another to recreate.
- ‘What’s Wrong?’ pictures. 1 person describes a What’s Wrong card for the other person to draw. You do not need a physical barrier for this game.



- Lotto game. Give one child the lotto board and one counter. Give the other child the matching cards. The child chooses a card and describes it, The child with the board puts the counter on to show which picture is being described. This game can also be used to practice specific language skills –for example, if the child is working on prepositions, they could use prepositions lotto.
- Dressing game. Print out 2 people and 2 identical sets of clothes and hair from [www.makingfriends.com](http://www.makingfriends.com). Cut the clothes out and laminate them for durability. Give each child a set. One child dresses their person and describes what they are doing, the other tries to make theirs the same.
- Lego. Use a simple Lego kit. One person has the instructions from the kit, while the other has the pieces. The person with the instructions describes how to make the model. You do not need a physical barrier for this game.
- Bead threading. Use a set of beads and commercially produced cards (or make your own set, using drawings or photos of the beads available to you), showing strings of beads. One child describes the string to the other child who makes them.
- Guess Who? Play commercially available ‘Guess Who?’ game. You do not need a physical barrier for this game. Make your own ‘Guess Who?’ (especially suitable for group work). Take photos of everyone in the group. Optional – each person to add a paragraph about themselves giving information such as name, age, class/teacher’s name, favourite colour/food etc. Spread the pictures out in front of the group. One person chooses one of the pictures, without saying which it is. The rest of the group ask questions to work out who has been chosen.
- Drawing activity. Provide each child with some paper an identical pack of pens or coloured pencils. Have one child draw a picture and describe it. The other person has to try to make an identical picture.
- Colouring activity. Give each child an identical picture to colour (colouring pictures can be downloaded from a number of websites, alternatively, draw your own), and an identical set of pens/pencils. One child colours their picture and describes it for the others to make theirs the same.

# HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE IT?



What Shape is it?

What Size is it?

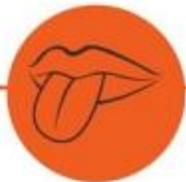
What Color is it?



What does it Sound like?



What does it Smell like?



What does it Taste like?



What does it Feel like?

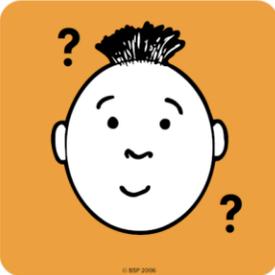


# Supporting Narrative Language Skills

- **Narrative language** is the language required to relay a set of events. Recounting an event in one's personal life or explaining the life cycle of an animal—both these tasks require narrative language to relay the events clearly. Narrative language skills "include the ability to organize information in a logical sequence, as well as connect that information using appropriate complex grammatical structures" ([Foorman et al., 2016](#)). Narrative language skills can be actively taught and practiced, strengthening students' ability to both create and understand sequences of events in oral language.



## Colourful Semantics

			
Who ?	What happened ?	To what / to who ?	Where ?

Recount	
Title	
Setting	When 
	Who 
	Where 
What happened?	  

# Allowing Wait Time

Waiting at least 3–5 seconds for children to respond is difficult but important. In reality this should be called ‘thinking time’ rather than wait time, because some children need additional time to process information before composing their answer.

Answers tend to be more complex if students are given more time to formulate their answer.

The acronym OWL (observe, wait, listen) has been successfully used to help remember the importance of giving children time to respond (Konza et al, 2010; Pepper & Weitzman, 2004).

It is also a useful tip for teachers.



# Building Oral Language Development into Daily Routines and Activity

Oral language development can occur any time, anywhere. Because oral language permeates the school day, it is easy to build oral language practice into daily routines such as

- roll call;
- distribution and collection of materials;
- classroom organisation; entry and exit routines;
- instructions.

For example, during roll call, the teacher could ask a question of each child that must be answered in a sentence, such as ‘Where were you born?’ or ‘What is the name of one of your friends?’

Other activities that incorporate open-ended questions can be built into problem-solving in mathematics (Can you think of another way to...?);

- daily story book reading (How did that make you feel?);
- conflict resolution (How do you think he felt when...?);
- and classroom organisation (How might we...?).



# Modelling Thinking Processes: 'Think Alouds'

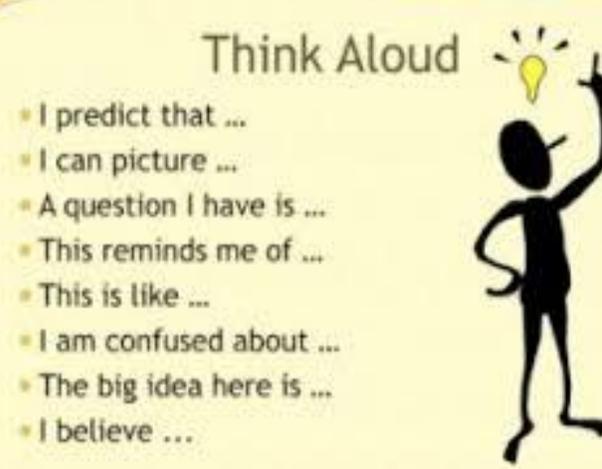
We can observe young children talking to themselves as they engage in an activity. A typically developing five-year-old might be heard saying 'I'm colouring in the hair now. I'm choosing yellow...oh, that one's broken...I'll pick orange...' and so on. As children mature, this 'overt' speech becomes progressively quieter mutterings or whispers until it is 'covert' or private speech: essentially the overt speech has become thought. This developmental progression is consistent with private speech research (Berk, 1986; Bivens & Berk, 1990).

While most activity conducted by adults proceeds without overt speech, **many of us revert to this when tasks become difficult**. The more difficult the problem, the more likely we are to articulate our thinking processes as we search for a solution.

Even quite minor hiccups in our day require this strategy: muttered utterances like 'Where did I leave my keys?' and 'Now why did I come in here?' punctuate our days.

Students whose language skills are not well developed are less able to use this strategy for either minor or major problem-solving tasks: modelling this for a range of tasks and situations is a very useful strategy. Making thinking processes transparent by thinking aloud reveals for many students the 'secrets of learning': the strategies that efficient learners use to work their way through a task or problem.

Self-talk is also a useful mediating strategy when feeling frustrated or becoming angry. Children who cannot manage their anger are often those who are less articulate: they need to resort to a physical manifestation of their frustration. Developing their oral language skills and use of language-based strategies does two things: it increases the chances that they have the words to resolve the issue verbally and it increases the chance that they can engage in positive self-talk and talk themselves down from mounting anger through the use of calming statements, such as 'OK—I don't have to get angry...I can handle this...I just have to take three deep breaths... then I think about what else I can do...I could just walk away...I could count to ten...' and so on. Teachers could refer to times when they have used these strategies, thus providing models of these important social and self-management skills.



# Teacher Modelling Clear and Correct Use of Oral Language

One of the most important things that teachers can do is to provide a good model of oral language use to demonstrate how the correct use of language assists communication and facilitates understanding.

- Give unambiguous instructions;
- Use accurate descriptive and positional language;
- Use precise terminology where necessary;
- Give clear feedback

Monitoring student understanding : Whatever year level you are teaching, teachers need to ensure that the language of instruction and management is understandable to the students. This will require regular **checking for understanding** to ensure you have a clear idea of the level of the students' receptive language skills. Students may not be understanding much of what the teacher is saying if they

- have trouble concentrating during teacher talk;
- look blank or confused;
- answer questions inappropriately (for example, by giving a 'where' answer to a 'why' question);
- only partially follow directions;
- or wait until others have responded before they respond.

Teachers who are aware of these indicators can monitor their students' understanding and adjust their language where necessary.

## Tips for Giving Instructions

- emphasise important words
- place verbs at the beginning of sentences.

Remember the 4S's rule:

- 1 say less
- 2 stress important words
- 3 slow down
- 4 show.

*Less able users of the language tend to understand verbs and nouns more easily than more abstract parts of speech, such as prepositions and more complex constructions, like the negative.*

*An instruction like 'Don't cut out before you colour in' is likely to be heard as 'blah blah cut out blah blah colour in', resulting in the exact opposite of what the teacher wanted, leaving some children confused as to what they did wrong*



# Timely Feedback – Modelling Back

Students need to learn when their language or social interaction is incorrect or inappropriate.

The most effective response is to model the correct way without explicitly pointing out the error: regular errors should be targeted in a later lesson. Students also need support if they are standing too close, not giving appropriate eye contact or not allowing others to have a turn. These need to be gently pointed out.

While many children learn these skills over time, some children do not have the opportunity, so it is up to their teachers to support the development of these skills.

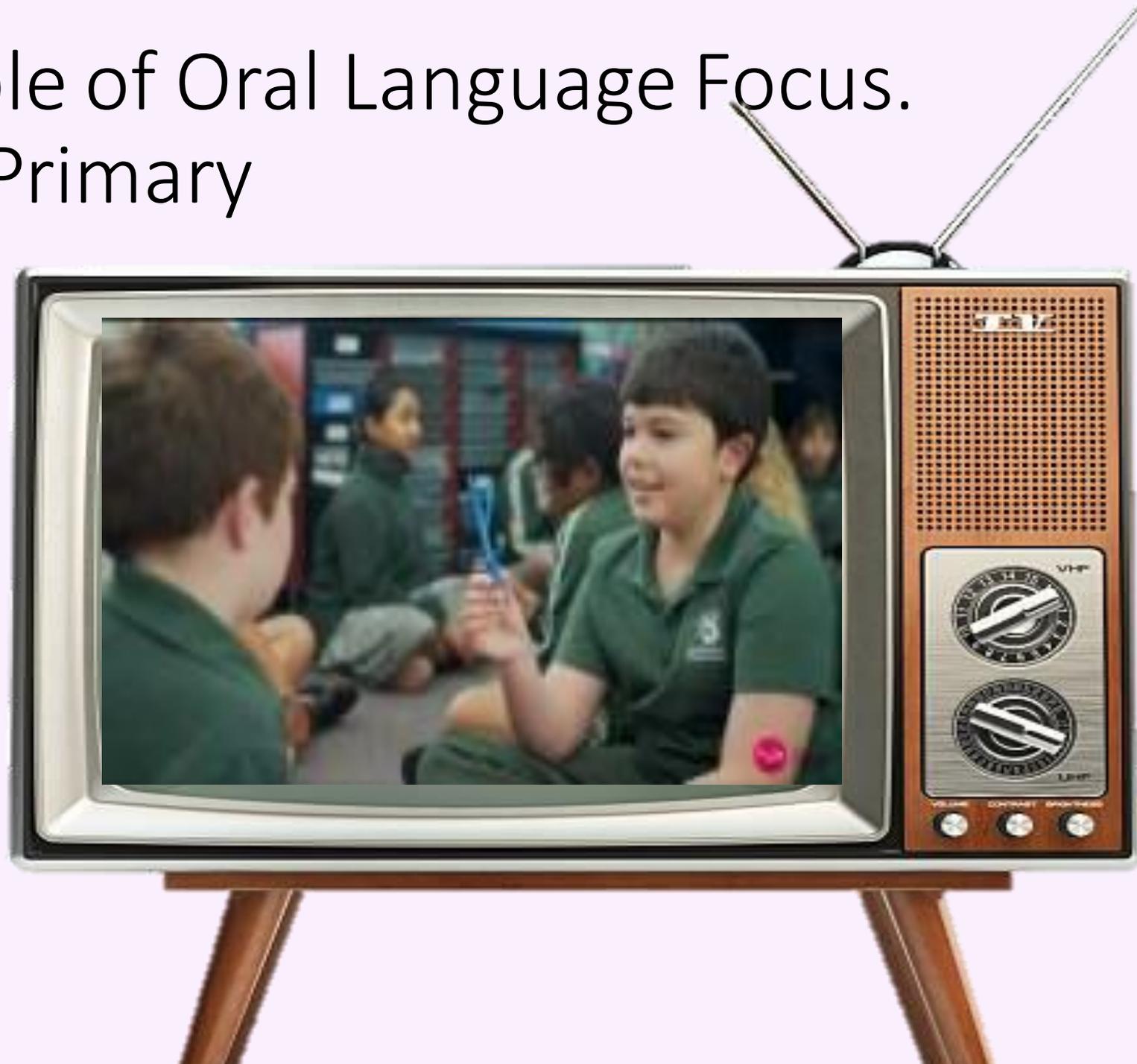
Example:

*Student: “The girl eating his sandwich”*

*Adult: “Yes the girl is eating her sandwich”*



# NZ Example of Oral Language Focus. Burnside Primary





## SUMMARY

- Remember to provide wait time of 3-5 seconds - in reality this should be called “thinking time” because some children need additional time to process information before composing their answer. Answers tend to be more complex if students are given more time to formulate their answer
- Build oral language development into daily routines
- Building language into instructions, entry and exit routines, play, songs, rhymes and stories during children’s early years develops language proficiency and builds positive attitudes towards literacy-related activities.
- Target some aspect of oral language development in each lesson – plan what aspect you will target. Effective oral language use requires concentration and attention. Oral language needs to be developed both incidentally, using “teachable moments”, and explicitly planned into lessons.
- Use stimulus pictures: This discussion strategy is a good place to practice natural language and language lessons. Use sets of picture cards purchased commercially or make a collection using old calendar photos or magazine pages.
- Use of Stories and books: Using books and stories to stimulate discussion is very important to connect the oral to print to literate continuum. Reading – the perfect strategy
- Retell – practice of correct sequencing, use of the past tense, and time-related connecting words such as after, then, next.
- Asking and answering questions: Ask literal and inferential questions at every opportunity throughout the day.
- Categorisation/Classification activities: Use opportunities in all Learning Areas to classify items by use, colour, content etc. Give the students the categories or let them discover the categories.

Extra Support Needs

# Oral Language Based Disorders – Look For:



- Oral language based disorder is related to the different levels required to process language including
  - What they hear, at a phoneme level, word level, conversation/discourse level.
  - What they can produce at a phoneme, word, conversation/discourse level.
  - What they understand from what they hear
  - How well they can communicate an idea/meaning in speech.
- It can impact reading, writing, spelling, listening and speaking as it affects orthographic mapping, sequencing of ideas, selection and use of vocabulary and syntax.
- There is a continuum of manifestations and the level of support they require.
  - Phonological processing – how students process spoken language.
    - Do they have difficulty pronouncing words accurately?
    - Do they have difficulty perceiving auditorily similar sounds?
    - Do they have difficulty learning when information is presented in a primarily auditory manner?
    - Do they have difficulty remembering names?
  - Orthographic processing – how are students connecting sound to print and how are they interacting with print?
    - Do they have difficulty with ‘coding’? i.e. matching graphemes to phonemes (that have been taught). Difficulty with phonetic spelling and writing. Translating spoken words into print.
    - Slow, laborious handwriting.
  - Meaning – how students use vocabulary and engage in discourse in a meaning-based context
    - Do they correctly match words and meanings?
    - Can they infer from text?
    - Do they understand words at a morphological level?
    - Do they have trouble sequencing their thinking in words?
    - Are verbal responses limited?
- Social emotional links to language-based disorders.
  - All our learning is language based. Language is expressive and receptive communication.
  - Language based disorders are likely to be visible across multiple areas of processing – reading, writing, thinking, participation and contributions, relating to others, self-regulation, emotions etc. The difficulty will compound over time.
  - It impacts memory as language connects how we code information
  - They tend to have a fixed mind-set over a growth mid-set. They tend not to feel very good about themselves due to consistent academic failure.

If you identify any behaviours which might indicate a language based disorder, intervene early and intentionally using evidence based practices. This will improve their academic performance as well as behaviour and social/emotional wellbeing.

# Structured Literacy Interventions for Oral Language Comprehension

## Using SVR to differentiate student learning

Once you have identified where students sit on the quadrant, you can consider how to address their differentiated learning needs. The following recommendations are provided for each of the quadrants:

### Students with poor word recognition but good language comprehension skills

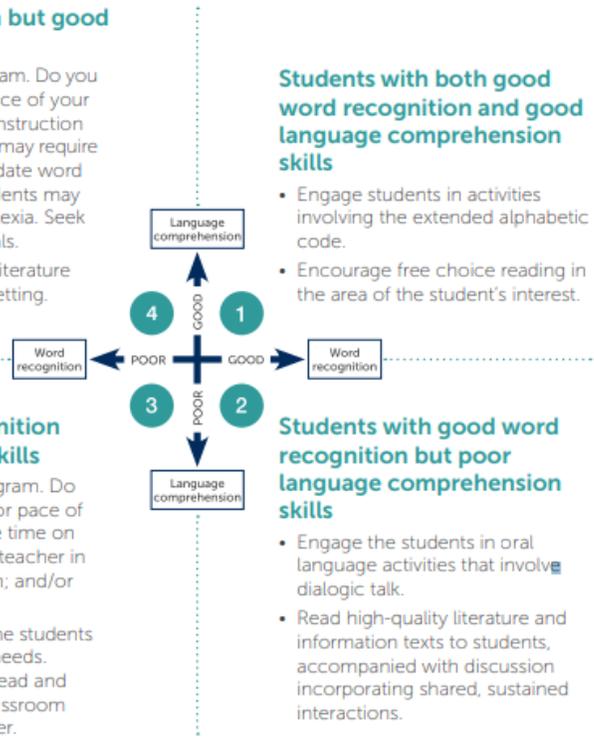
- Assess the effectiveness of your phonics program. Do you need to adjust the coverage, frequency or pace of your program? Do these students require further instruction with the teacher in decoding? These students may require multiple exposures and extra time to consolidate word recognition skills. It is possible that these students may have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia. Seek support and advice from relevant professionals.
- Continue to read and discuss rich children's literature and information texts within the classroom setting.

### Students with both good word recognition and good language comprehension skills

- Engage students in activities involving the extended alphabetic code.
- Encourage free choice reading in the area of the student's interest.

### Students with both poor word recognition and poor language comprehension skills

- Assess the effectiveness of your phonics program. Do you need to adjust the coverage, frequency or pace of your program? Do these students need more time on task; peer tutoring; further instruction by the teacher in both decoding and language comprehension; and/or periodic review with an SSO?
- Explore the language comprehension skills the students bring to the classroom. Address any special needs. Acquire expert help if required. Continue to read and discuss rich children's literature within the classroom setting as children often learn from each other.



## Common Poor-Reader Profiles (from Spear-Swerling, L. 2022)

Profile	Description	Potential Focus of Structured Literacy Intervention
specific word recognition difficulties (SWRD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>word recognition skills below average, usually due to poor phonemic awareness and/or for phonics skills</li> <li>broad oral language comprehension and vocabulary at least average</li> <li>reading comprehension at least average in texts child can decode well</li> <li>poor reading comprehension and poor fluency based entirely in word reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>phonemic awareness</li> <li>phonics</li> <li>automaticity of word reading</li> <li>spelling/ written expression</li> <li>text fluency (word accuracy/ automaticity focus)</li> </ul>
specific reading comprehension difficulties (SRCD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>word recognition skills, including phonics and phonemic awareness at least average</li> <li>reading comprehension below average despite good word reading, often due to a specific weakness in oral language areas such as vocabulary, syntax, background knowledge, inferencing, or pragmatics</li> <li>any fluency weaknesses based entirely in language comprehension, not word reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>individual <u>students</u> specific weaknesses in language comprehension (eg vocabulary, syntax, inferencing)</li> <li>text fluency (prosody/ language comprehension focus)</li> <li>reading comprehension</li> <li>written expression</li> </ul>
mixed reading difficulties (MRD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>word recognition skills below average, usually due to poor phonemic awareness and/ poor phonics skills</li> <li>reading comprehension also weak, beyond what can be accounted for by poor word reading (eg students have poor reading comprehension even in some text they can decode well)</li> <li>specific oral language weaknesses (EG vocabulary, syntax) contribute to reading comprehension problems that are due to a combination of word recognition and language comprehension weaknesses</li> <li>reading fluency often poor due to a combination of word recognition and language comprehension weaknesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phonemic awareness</li> <li>Phonics</li> <li>automaticity of word reading</li> <li>spelling</li> <li>text fluency</li> <li>individual <u>students</u> specific weaknesses in language comprehension (eg vocabulary, syntax, inferencing)</li> <li>reading comprehension</li> <li>written expression</li> </ul>

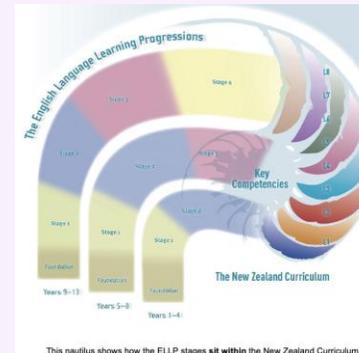
# English Language Learners – useful resources

Teachers scaffold student's learning in order to help them achieve. For an English Language Learner this will include scaffolding to support a their use of the English language.

[ESOL online - Oral Language](#)



[English Language Learning Progressions \(ELLP\) Pathway](#)



# Auditory Memory

**Auditory memory involves the ability to**

- assimilate information presented orally,
- process that information,
- store it and
- recall what has been heard.



Essentially, it involves the task of attending, listening, processing, storing, and recalling. This may be a challenging task for many students, including those who do not have a learning difficulty. A weakness in auditory memory can have serious consequences for learning because pupils may only pick up some of what is being said. Children with auditory memory problems appear to be trying very hard to listen. Because their eyes are focused on the teacher and they appear to be attentive, it is easy for the teacher to assume that these children have heard and taken in all that is being taught. However, in reality, they often absorb and make sense out of very little of what is being mediated by the teacher. As a result, these students recall only a small amount or none of what is being said. They might remember a word here or there, or part of a thought, without truly understanding much of the information presented orally to them. Students with auditory memory deficiencies frequently experience difficulty comprehending orally presented directions. They often think that they have understood directions for completing their tasks but when they become engaged in tasks, they often ask for the help or indeed ask for the teacher to repeat the instructions.

This will also impact reading as they also experience difficulty processing and recalling information that they have read to themselves. When we read we must listen and process information we say to ourselves, even when we read silently. If we do not attend and listen to our silent input of words, we cannot process the information or recall what we have read. Therefore, **even silent reading involves a form of listening.** Auditory Memory difficulties may lead to many problems in school with oral comprehension and the ability to follow oral directions.

## How you can help.

*Support students to*

- *Repeat and use information*
- *Recite poems, songs, tales, rhymes, etc.*
- *Memorise and sequence songs*
- *Re-tell stories, e.g. fairytales, myths*
- *Re-tell stories using puppets or by illustrating a map*
- *Recall verbal messages or phone numbers*
- *Play memory games Kim's game, Guess Who, Simon Says, 'My Grandma went shopping and bought me a...'*
- *Chinese Whispers*
- *Recount news events*
- *Use visual cues and mnemonics*

*Whanau consultation is paramount*

# What is Auditory Processing Disorder (APD)?

Auditory processing disorder (APD), sometimes referred to as central auditory processing disorder (CAPD), is a general term for hearing disorders in which the ears process sound normally but the hearing centres and circuits of the brain don't always process incoming information sufficiently quickly or accurately. Children with APD can hear but they sometimes have trouble understanding what they hear. It can affect understanding, especially in challenging listening situations such as in the presence of other distracting sound, or when listening to complex information, for example, instructions. It is under-recognised and can be an underlying cause of learning difficulties in many children. It is estimated that 1 in 20 children may have difficulties that affect processing of auditory information in the brain.

Support strategies are designed by specialist audiology team but can include

- Auditory training
- Assistive hearing technology
- Language therapy



## Could it be APD?

- *difficulty following spoken directions unless brief and simple*
- *difficulty attending to and remembering spoken information*
- *slowness in processing spoken information*
- *difficulty understanding in the presence of other sounds*
- *being overwhelmed by complex or "busy" auditory environments e.g. classrooms, shopping malls*
- *undue sensitivity to loud sounds or noise*
- *poor listening skills*
- *preference for loud television volume*
- *insensitivity to tone of voice or other nuances of speech*

## How you can help:

Phonological awareness training

Ensure you have the child's attention before you speak

Keep instructions brief and supported with visuals.

Referral e.g.

- <https://soundskills.co.nz/referral-form/>
- Whanau consultation is essential

# Referring Children for Assessment of Significant Speech and Language Delays

Referral to a speech language therapist is recommended if a child's speech or language is significantly delayed or different from peers, particularly in the early years of school. Investigate also whether a hearing assessment has been conducted. Hearing problems can be an outcome of a range of causes, including inherited conditions, infections during pregnancy, birth difficulties and chronic ear infections: they need to be identified as early as possible.

- Ministry Of Education: The Ministry of Education employs speech-language therapists who support children with speech, language and communication needs. Contact your local MOE office for more information. <https://www.education.govt.nz/school/student-support/special-education/supporting-students-with-communication-needs/>
- Regional DHB Department Links: If you are looking for a paediatric assessment regarding concerns about a child's speech, language, social, or eating skills, you may want to recommend that the student's parents ask their GP about a referral to the child development service in your local district health board. (Auckland: [Auckland District Health Board](#))



# ASSESSMENT

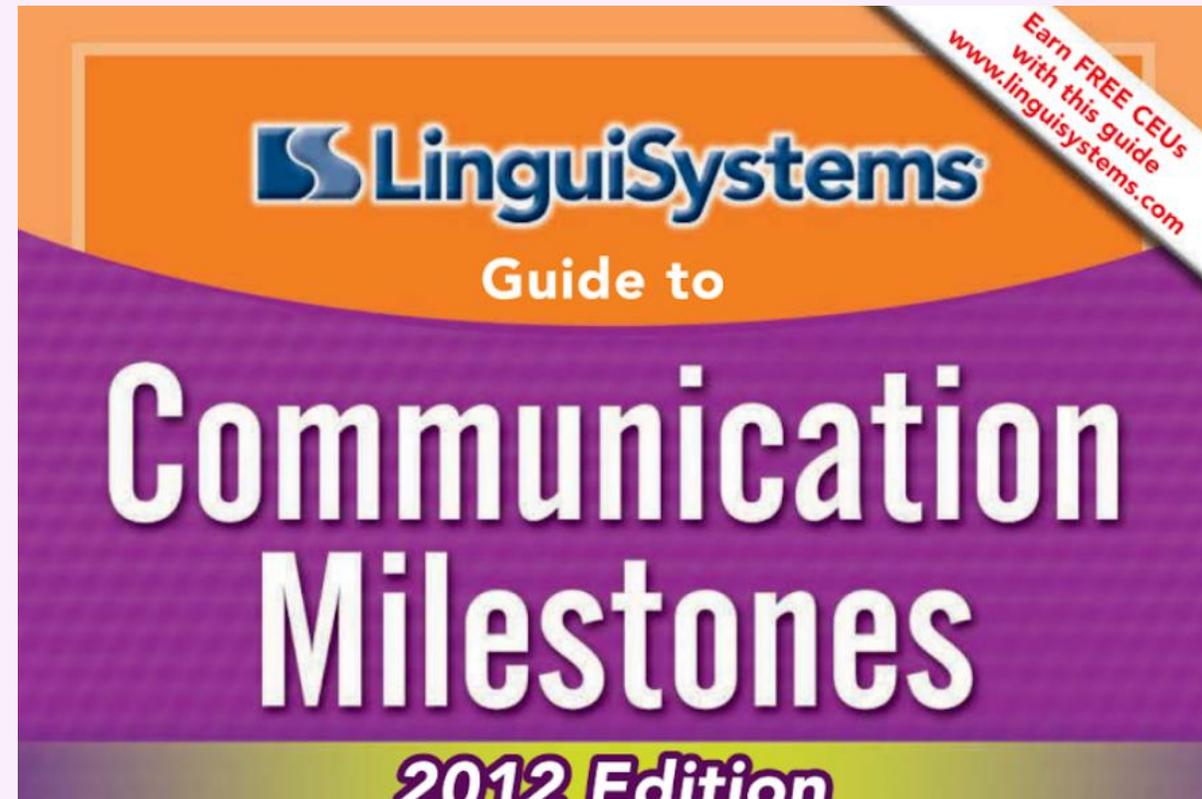
- Language Sampling Protocols – Westerveld and Gillon
- Collect Oral language sample – transcribe, analyse



# Links to Support Your Work in This Area

North Carolina Guidelines  
for  
Speech-Language Pathology  
Services in Schools

01/10/20



*International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 2014; 16(5): 495–506



## **Oral language supports early literacy: A pilot cluster randomized trial in disadvantaged schools**

PAMELA C. SNOW<sup>1</sup>, PATRICIA A. EADIE<sup>2</sup>, JUDY CONNELL<sup>3</sup>, BRENDA DALHEIM<sup>3</sup>,  
HUGH J. McCUSKER<sup>4</sup> & JOHN K. MUNRO<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*School of Psychology & Psychiatry, Monash University, Australia,* <sup>2</sup>*Department of Audiology & Speech Pathology, University of Melbourne, Australia,* <sup>3</sup>*Catholic Education Office, Melbourne, Australia,* <sup>4</sup>*Private Practice, Melbourne, Australia,* and <sup>5</sup>*Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Australia*

### **Abstract**

This study examined the impact of teacher professional development aimed at improving the capacity of primary teachers in disadvantaged schools to strengthen children's expressive and receptive oral language skills and early literacy success in the first 2 years of school. Fourteen low-SES schools in Victoria, Australia were randomly allocated to a research ( $n = 8$ ) or control arm ( $n = 6$ ), resulting in an initial sample of 1254 students, ( $n = 602$  in research arm and  $n = 652$  in control arm). The intervention comprised 6 days of teacher and principal professional development (delivered by language and literacy experts), school-based continuing contact with the research team and completion by one staff member of each research

# Reading Comprehension Requires Knowledge— of Words and the World

*Scientific Insights into the Fourth-Grade Slump and  
the Nation's Stagnant Comprehension Scores*

By E. D. Hirsch, Jr.

# Oral Language in Early Childhood and Primary Education (3-8 years)



# Contemporary Comments

## *Interviewing juvenile offenders: The importance of oral language competence*

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A police officer is interviewing a 14 year-old 'frequent flyer' in the juvenile justice system. In an effort to gauge the extent of this young man's recent exploits, the police officer poses the following question: 'So — could you have stolen upwards of twenty cars?' 'Ye-eh' replied the young offender indignantly 'Of course'.

### Introduction

In this exchange, the young man in question had not, in fact, stolen 'upwards of twenty cars'. His self-incriminating response, however, stems from a pervasive yet invisible difficulty experienced by many young offenders with respect to processing and using oral language effectively. Such difficulties may not be evident in superficial social exchanges.

# Trends & issues

in crime and criminal justice

No. 435 April 2012



Australian Government  
Australian Institute of Criminology

**Foreword** | *Youth offenders can be complex and challenging for policymakers and practitioners alike and face higher risk of long-term disadvantage and social marginalisation. In many cases, this marginalisation from the mainstream begins in early life, particularly in the classroom, where they have difficulty both with language/literacy tasks and with the interpersonal demands of the classroom. Underlying both sets of skills is oral language competence—the ability*

## Youth (in)justice: Oral language competence in early life and risk for engagement in antisocial behaviour in adolescence

Pamela Snow and Martine Powell

If one was to gather a group of forensic mental health experts in a room and ask them to discuss risk predictors for offending behaviour in adolescence, it is likely that factors

## Talk rules: an example

### Class 5's Talk Rules

1. We listen to each other carefully
2. We share all our ideas
3. We ask each other: *'What do you think?'* and *'Why?'*
4. We think about what we hear
5. We say as much as we can, taking turns and following on
6. We question and comment on each other's ideas



**Talking together**  
**Te kōrerorero**

# Talking Together

## Te Kōrerorero



INTENTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES

# Talking together Te kōrerorero

**Kaiako knowing all children well and determining which practices to use to foster their learning of oral language is fundamental to effective teaching.**

# Support for Whanau - example

## Developing Oral Language with your child

### Top Ten Tips for Parents /Guardians



Infants – 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Class	5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> Class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to what your child is saying /trying to say and respond to contributions</li> <li>• Make and maintain eye contact while talking with your child</li> <li>• Explain the meaning of words</li> <li>• Talk through activities</li> <li>• Talk through everyday experiences</li> <li>• Involve your child in discussions / plans</li> <li>• Ask / Answer questions</li> <li>• Teach your child nursery rhymes / songs / poems/ raps</li> <li>• Develop your child's receptive language by asking him/her to follow simple instructions</li> <li>• Assist your child to express ideas in an orderly fluent way</li> <li>• Read to your child each night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set aside 10-15 minutes to discuss the day's happenings</li> <li>• Encourage your child to express and justify opinions</li> <li>• Involve your child in adult conversation when appropriate</li> <li>• Talk about the child's favourite T.V programme</li> <li>• Play language games which focus on words i.e. Scrabble, crosswords</li> <li>• Encourage your child to talk about experiences with a wide range of people ; peers, relations, other adults</li> <li>• Listen carefully and clarify meaning 'Do you mean /or is this what you mean?'</li> <li>• Encourage your child to give reasons for decisions</li> <li>• Encourage your child to listen courteously to the opinions of others</li> <li>• Talk about school topics and assignments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your child to develop a positive attitude to speaking / listening</li> <li>• Discuss your child's school work successes/concerns/interests.</li> <li>• Respect your child's opinions and feelings</li> <li>• Involve your child in adult conversations, when appropriate</li> <li>• Help your child to extend his range of words in specialised subjects</li> <li>• Encourage your child to listen and respond courteously to others.</li> <li>• Watch and discuss T.V. news / current affairs programmes together</li> <li>• Assist your child to locate information in local library, internet</li> <li>• Talk about school topics and assignments</li> <li>• Play commercial games that focus on word building</li> </ul>

# 100% Speaking & Listening

Nomi Kaston



# Shared Storybook Reading and Oral Language Development: A Bioecological Perspective

Lorenz Grolig\*

Max Planck Research Group Reading Education and Development (REaD), Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany

Early Childhood focus: interdisciplinary perspective on children's shared reading experiences at home and at the child care center and their relationships to oral language development.

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) regarding the relationship between shared storybook reading and oral language development.

Second, we develop a framework for investigating effects of shared reading on language development in two important microsystems: the home literacy environment (HLE) and the child care literacy environment (CCLE). Zooming in on shared storybook reading as a proximal process that drives oral language development, we then develop a triad model of language learning through shared storybook reading.

Third, we discuss implications for the Home Literacy Model (Sénéchal and LeFevre, 2002, 2014) regarding the conceptualization of shared reading as an important source of oral language development.

## Listening Comprehension, the Cinderella Skill Giving the Neglected Stepchild Her Due

by Louise Spear-Swerling

Listening comprehension is sometimes called the "Cinderella skill" (e.g., Jalongo, 2010; Vandergrift, 1997) because of its tendency to be neglected in English language arts (ELA) instruction. The inclusion of listening in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) may appear to address this oversight. Unfortunately, however, coverage of listening comprehension in the standards is inadequate at best. This article focuses on listening comprehension in terms of the structure of language and the specific skills that teachers require in order to address the listening needs of their students.

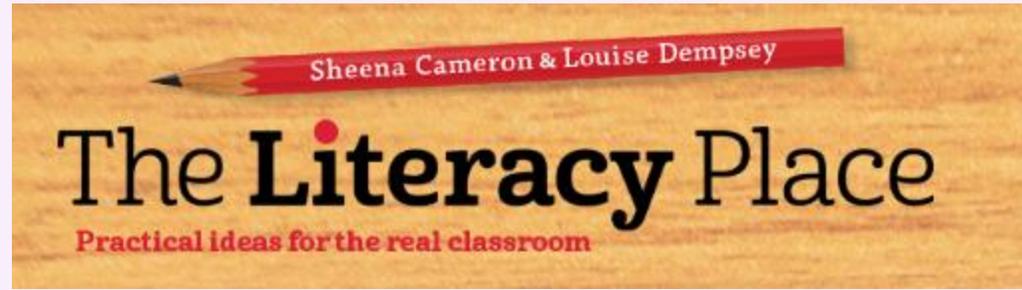
Listening comprehension is important in both theoretical and practical terms. It has a prominent role in widely referenced scientific models of reading. Both the Simple View of Reading (Hoover & Gough, 1990) and Scarborough's Rope Model (2001) include listening comprehension and word recognition as the two broad types of abilities foundational to good reading comprehension. Researchers have considered listening comprehension as a way to differentiate dyslexia from other types of reading problems and, historically, as a possible substitute for IQ in discrepancy-based definitions of dyslexia (e.g., Badian, 1999; Stanovich, 1991). The definition of specific learning disabilities (SLD) in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, popularly

weak listening skills may require additional supports, such as vocabulary aids. Universal screening measures that emphasize phonological skills such as decoding nonsense words are helpful for identifying many at-risk readers. However, phonologically based measures tend to miss at-risk children whose problems do not involve phonology (Riedel, 2007)—that is, those children whose difficulties involve only the listening comprehension component of the simple view. Scarborough (2005) notes that the accuracy of early identification efforts could be improved if schools supplemented their phonological screening efforts with other kinds of language screening.

---

*Listening comprehension is critical to students' success in formal schooling. It has important implications for differentiating instruction, designing interventions, and selecting screening and progress monitoring tools, accommodations, and assistive technology.*

# The Literacy Place



- C** – colour
- U** – use
- M** – made of
- P** – parts

bored	brave	calm	cautious
changed	cheerful	clumsy	comfortable
confident	courageous	crazy	defeated
delighted	determined	dizzy	eager
shamed	embarrassed	energetic	enthusiastic
excited	fantastic	fearful	fierce
fine	frantic	frightened	frustrated
furious	giddy	glad	gleeful
glorious	happy	helpless	hesitant
hungry	jittery	jolly	joyful
joyous	joyful	lazy	lively
lucky	motivated	nervous	panicky
perfect	prepared	proud	ready
relieved	reluctant	scared	sleepy
sore	splendid	stunned	tearful
tense	terrible	terrified	tired



**SCUMPS activity**  
Includes: SCUMPS prompt cards and activity instructions  
Focus: describing an object

**Word list – adjectives to describe feelings**  
Includes: word list of adjectives to describe feelings  
Focus: developing vocabulary

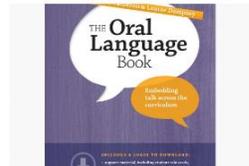
Check out our Youtube channel for inspiration and ideas

- Elaboration prompts**
- Can you give an example?
  - Can you explain your idea?
  - Can you justify your opinion?
  - How else could we think about this?
  - Can you develop this idea further?
  - Could someone else give their views?



**Elaboration prompts posters**  
Includes: two elaboration prompts posters  
Focus: supporting students to explain their thinking and add detail to their ideas

**Raccoons in the dumpster**  
Includes: a writing lesson plan, YouTube video link and two video talk strips (for juniors and seniors)  
Focus: describing an event from the perspective of a character



**Links for The Oral Language Book**  
Useful links and resources to support The Oral Language Book

## Related resources



**The full moon**  
Focus: using similes and metaphors to create a poem about the moon



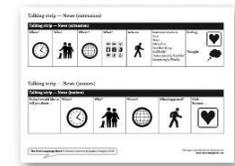
**Children from around the world**  
Focus: using interesting and thought-provoking images to motivate students for writing



Check out our Youtube channel for inspiration and ideas

## Adjectives to describe feelings

afraid	agitated	amazed	amused
anxious	apprehensive	astonished	bewildered
bored	brave	calm	cautious
charged	cheerful	clumsy	comfortable
confident	courageous	crazy	defeated
delighted	determined	dizzy	eager
elated	embarrassed	energetic	enthusiastic
excited	fantastic	fearful	fierce
fine	frantic	frightened	frustrated
furious	giddy	glad	gleeful
glorious	happy	helpless	hesitant
hungry	jittery	jolly	joyful
joyous	joyful	lazy	lively
lucky	motivated	nervous	panicky
perfect	prepared	proud	ready
relieved	reluctant	scared	sleepy
sore	splendid	stunned	tearful
tense	splendid	stunned	tearful
troubled	upset	victorious	vulnerable
weary	wonderful	worried	



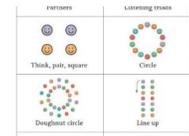
**Talking strip - News**  
Includes: a two talking strips  
Focus: oral presentations



**Drama activity**  
Includes: drama activity cards/poster  
Focus: using drama to enhance speaking and



**Retelling talking strips**  
Includes: two retelling talking strips  
Focus: retelling



**Talking groups**  
Includes: a poster and an information sheet  
Focus: grouping students



**Conversation prompt chart**  
Includes: two versions of the conversation prompt chart presented in The Oral Language Book and The Reading Book  
Focus: to support whole-class, group or partner discussions

## Five Books, Five Literacy-Building Ideas!

By *Andrea Lynn Koohi*  
*Hanen staff writer*

 PRINT

One of the most important things you can do to prepare your child for school success is to help her develop early literacy skills. These skills are the “tools” your child needs to learn to read and write, so the more early literacy skills she has now the better prepared she’ll be for school.

Here are some fun tips for building the five critical early literacy skills your child needs to learn: **oral language, vocabulary, story comprehension, print knowledge, and sound awareness.**

### 1. Oral Language

When you pause during book reading to talk about the story and what interests your child, you provide her with lots of opportunities to think and talk about the story, which builds her comprehension and her oral language skills – key

Isabel L. Beck \_\_\_\_\_  
Margaret G. McKeown

## Text Talk: Capturing the benefits of read-aloud experiences for young children

*Keeping important text ideas in focus and scaffolding children’s responses and ideas are keys to successful read-alouds.*

**C**oncern about young children’s language development has recently centered on the large individual differences among children in vocabulary and comprehension abilities as they begin school (Biemiller, 1999; Hart & Risley, 1995). The goal of the project we describe here is to enhance young children’s language and comprehension abilities through in-depth and extensive experiences listening to and talking about stories read to them.

Of course reading aloud to children has been

### What kind of texts?

Texts that are effective for developing language and comprehension ability need to be conceptually challenging enough to require grappling with ideas and taking an active stance toward constructing meaning. The point is that young children can handle challenging content. Yet the limits of young children’s developing word recognition ability make it difficult to provide challenging content in the books they read on their own. However, because young chil-

# 17 Best Read-Aloud Books for Grades 4-5

These favorite read-alouds for older students provide opportunities to laugh together, and feature topics that might introduce new ideas for discussion.

March 30, 2021

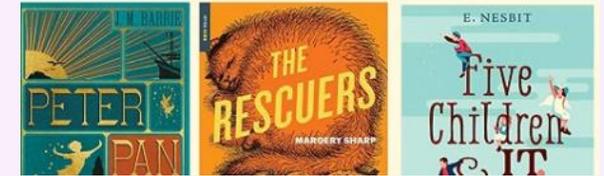
Grades  
4 - 5

## 20 Chapter Books to Read Aloud With Your Kids



# 50

## Classic Chapter Books to Read Aloud with Your Kids



## The absolute best read-out-loud chapter books

EDUCATION



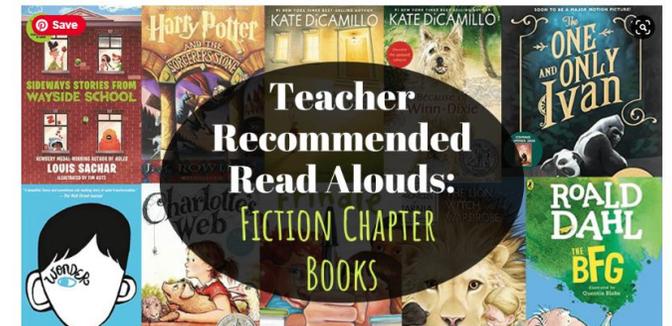
## 50 Best Read Aloud Chapter Books for Children Ages 6-12 Years

Inside: A great big list of the **best read aloud chapter books** for children ages 6-12 years.

As I shared in our previous list, [150 Best Kids Picture Books to Read Aloud](#), I recently asked friends of the [Childhood 101](#) community to share their favourite read aloud titles – both picture books and chapter books/novels. This post shares 50 great chapter book read alouds from that survey, with titles that are suitable from children age around 6 to 12 years of age. I love that these are books that have been actually recommended by parents and teachers!



## The Best Chapter Book Read Alouds for 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade Classrooms



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA

# Literacy online



## English Online home

### Literacy Online home

#### – Learning about my students' needs

Knowledge of the learner

#### Knowledge of literacy

##### Oral language

Differentiation between the writing standards

Literacy and teaching as inquiry

#### + Planning for my students' needs

#### + Impact of changed practices

#### + Secondary Literacy

#### + Community

#### + News



### ESOL Online home

### Instructional Series home

[Literacy Online](#) > [Learning about my students' needs](#) > [Knowledge of literacy](#) > Oral language

## Oral language

Oral language is one of the foundations of early literacy. Having skills in listening, talking, viewing, drawing and critiquing are all important precursors to developing skills in reading and writing. Oral language is needed to negotiate social situations, create meaning of the world around them, and access the curriculum.

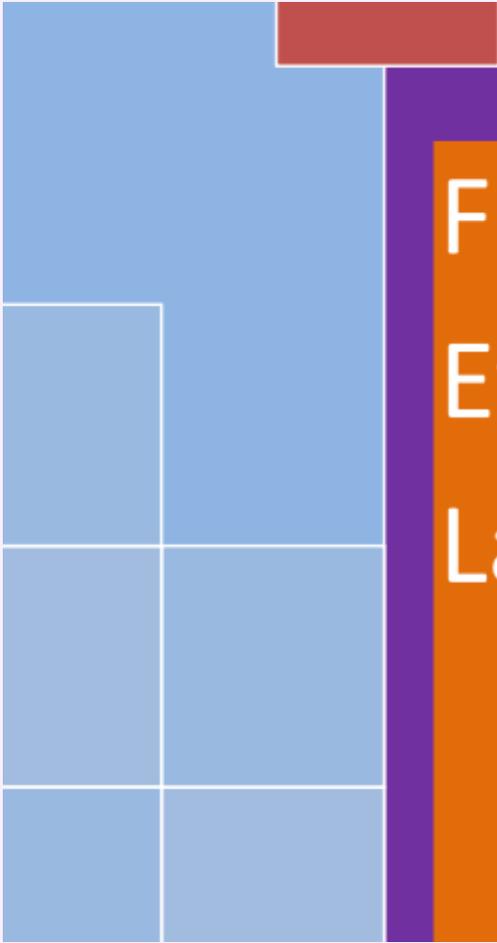


*Teachers need to engage all students in general classroom talk and in activities that require specific listening and talking skills. Teachers also need to be aware of and incorporate, the cultural practices and perspectives of all their students where possible. When students feel that the talk and activities in the classroom are meaningful, purposeful and meet their needs, they are likely to better engage in learning.*

ERO, 2017

Four kinds of oral language usage and development underpin curriculum access and students' ability to learn in later years:

- **Independent listening.** This includes the ability to listen to extended talk (such as stories, factual accounts, or presentations) and to retain the information so that it can be recalled. The kind of listening students are expected to do at school (especially where the teacher is talking to the whole class) often differs from the listening they are used to doing at home, where talk is mainly about familiar events and experiences, involving just a few people who know each other well.
- **Independent speaking.** This includes the ability to use extended talk (for example when recounting news, retelling a story, or explaining an idea) without



# Five Components of Effective Oral Language Instruction

## Here's Why Schools Should Use Structured Literacy

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By Louise Spear-Swerling, PhD

Recently the topic of Structured Literacy teaching has sparked considerable interest. Educators and parents often have questions about this approach:

- What does it involve?
- How is it different from the ways that children are usually taught to read?
- Why is it effective for children with dyslexia and other learning difficulties?

Here is an explanation of what *structured literacy* means and why schools should use it.

### What Is Structured Literacy?

Structured literacy (SL) approaches emphasize highly explicit and systematic teaching of all important components of literacy. These components include both foundational skills (e.g., decoding, spelling) and higher-level literacy skills (e.g., reading comprehension, written expression). SL also emphasizes oral language abilities essential to literacy development, including phonemic awareness, sensitivity to speech sounds in oral language, and the ability to manipulate those sounds.

*Explicit teaching* means that teachers clearly explain and model key skills; they do not expect children to infer these skills only from exposure. *Systematic* means that there is a well-organized sequence of instruction, with important prerequisite skills taught before more advanced skills. For instance, children master decoding and spelling simpler consonant-vowel-consonant words (e.g., *tap*) with short vowel sounds before learning more complex short-vowel words (e.g., *stamp* or *tapped*) with consonant blends or affixes.

Explicit, systematic teaching requires teacher-led instruction. Teacher-led instruction also enables educators to provide prompt, targeted feedback in response to children's mistakes, another characteristic of SL. For example, suppose that children are practicing



## Young Children's Oral Language Development

By: [Celia Genishi](#)

The development of oral language is one of the child's most natural – and impressive – accomplishments.

This article presents an overview of the process and mechanics of language development, along with implications for practice.

### Related Content

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### When and how language is learned

Almost all children learn the rules of their language at an early age through use, and over time, without formal instruction. Thus one source for learning must be genetic. Humans beings are born to speak; they have an innate gift for figuring out the rules of the language used in their environment.

The environment itself is also a significant factor. Children learn the specific variety of language (dialect) that the important people around them speak.

Children do not, however, learn only by imitating those around them. We know that children work through linguistic rules on their own because they use forms that adults never use, such as "I goed there before" or "I see your feets." Children eventually learn the conventional forms, went and feet, as they sort out for themselves the exceptions to the rules of English syntax.

As with learning to walk, learning to talk requires time for development and practice in everyday situations. Constant correction of a child's speech is usually unproductive.

Children seem born not just to speak, but also to interact socially. Even before they use words, they use cries and gestures to convey meaning; they often understand the meanings that others convey. The point of learning language and interacting socially, then, is not to master rules, but to make connections with other people and to make sense of experiences (Wells, 1986).

In summary, language occurs through an interaction among genes (which hold innate tendencies to communicate and be sociable), environment, and the child's own thinking

- Oral language websites <http://www.literacyconnections.com/OralLanguage.php> - games and circle time activities <http://waze.net/oea/> - some interesting ideas and lots of activities <http://www.teacherresourcesgalore.com/writing.htm> - bottom of the page oral language / puppets <http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/web/alphabet.html> - cool online activities <http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/product/developing-oral-language-with-barrier-games> book and CD – links to other oral language resources on this page <http://www.loveandreilly.com.au/> - A sound way plus lots of other resources [http://www.sandpiperpublications.com.au/what\\_monthly\\_feature.htm](http://www.sandpiperpublications.com.au/what_monthly_feature.htm) - new oracy program 10 Spot the difference websites: check the copyright before downloading them <http://www.freshforkids.com.au/games/spotdifference/spotdifgame.html> <http://www.chevroncars.com/games/spot-the-difference/> <http://www.irelandwood.leeds.sch.uk/mainpages/spot.htm> <http://www.kidsfront.com/findifferences.html> <http://puzzles.about.com/od/opticalillusions/ig/SpotTheDifferencePuzzles/> [www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/esl/](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/esl/) Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

- The Arc of Vocabulary: Oral Language Links to Comprehension for the Classroom Teachers Children often come to school with too little language to support comprehension of what they read. For these children their classroom is the primary place in which they will be given the time and opportunity to develop their speaking and listening skills. Teachers who have a deep and intentional understanding and focus on oral language as a significant contributor to reading comprehension can change outcomes for students. In this workshop, we will examine the arc of language development and its impact on reading comprehension. We will start by grounding ourselves in a research base for understanding the contribution language makes to reading comprehension. We will then learn about instructional approaches that address the need for us to enhance oral language for our students. We cannot simply tell children to talk more. We need to create a climate that nurtures oral expression and supports the development of speaking and active listening for students. We will learn and practice highly engaging activities that can make a difference for reading comprehension through planning intentional and meaningful opportunities for speaking and listening throughout the school day. Mother Teresa said, "Kind words can be short and easy to speak but their echoes are endless." We will create a rainbow of language instruction, which will echo in a student's reading comprehension for the rest of his life.

- Dr Judi Dodson





## How Do New Zealand Teachers Assess Children’s Oral Language and Literacy Skills at School Entry?

Tracy A. Cameron<sup>1</sup> · Jane L. D. Carroll<sup>1</sup> · Mele Taumoepeau<sup>1</sup> · Elizabeth Schaughency<sup>1</sup> 

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### Abstract

Teachers of year 0/1 students in English-medium schools in New Zealand (1896 schools) were invited to participate in a survey focussed on assessment of new entrant children’s oral language and emergent literacy skills, with an estimated 21% response rate ( $N=745$ ). Teachers indicated using a variety of methods for assessing children’s skills at school entry, from standardised measures to informal teacher judgements. In response to open-ended questions several dominant themes were identified: (a) concerns regarding the skill development of many new entrants; (b) a desire for tools to assess oral language and phonological awareness; (c) preferences for tools that were current, efficient, user-friendly and appropriate for use

# EXTENDING THEIR LANGUAGE – EXPANDING THEIR WORLD

Children’s oral language (birth-8 years)



## English Language Learning Progressions Pathway – Foundation to Stage 3

### An optional resource to support the use of the English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP)

This resource may be used to support:

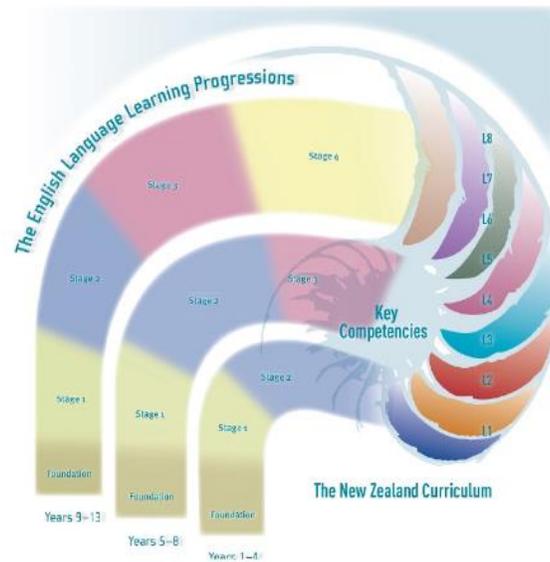
- teacher planning for individuals and groups
- understanding of aspects of additional language acquisition
- understanding and using the ELLP document
- making decisions about achieved stages for ESOL funding applications
- student agency and goal setting

How to use the ELLP Pathway resources:

- Pages 1-4 give an overview of the ELLP stages and emphasise the importance of knowing the learner.
- Notes about your learner can be added to the 'Know my learner' page.
- Pages 5-12 are an elaboration of the ELLP indicators along with teaching strategies and suggestions incorporating best practice.
- Indicators can be highlighted to assist with identifying next learning steps. Support indicators are highlighted when the support described is in place, achievement indicators when they are achieved consistently and independently across a range of contexts.
- This record can stay with a learner as they move from class to class.

#### Key ESOL resources

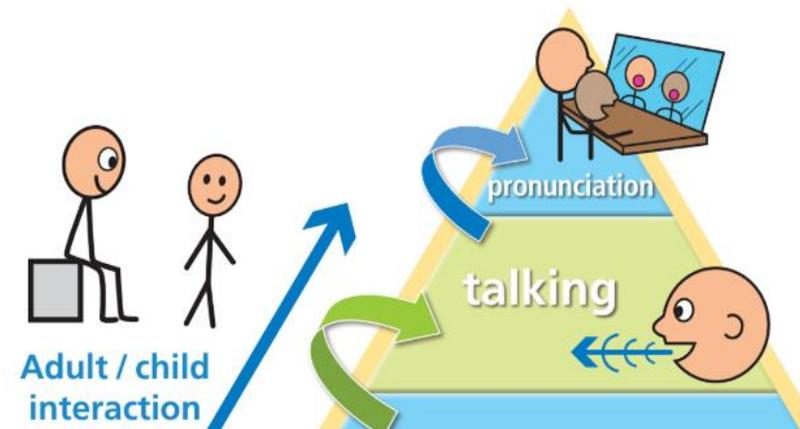
- [English Language Learning Progressions \(ELLP\)](#)
- [ELLP support for teaching and planning](#)
- [Supporting English Language Learning in Primary Schools \(SELLIPS\)](#)
- [English Language Intensive Programme \(ELIP\) Primary Resources](#)
- [ESOL Online](#)
- [ESOL Principles](#)

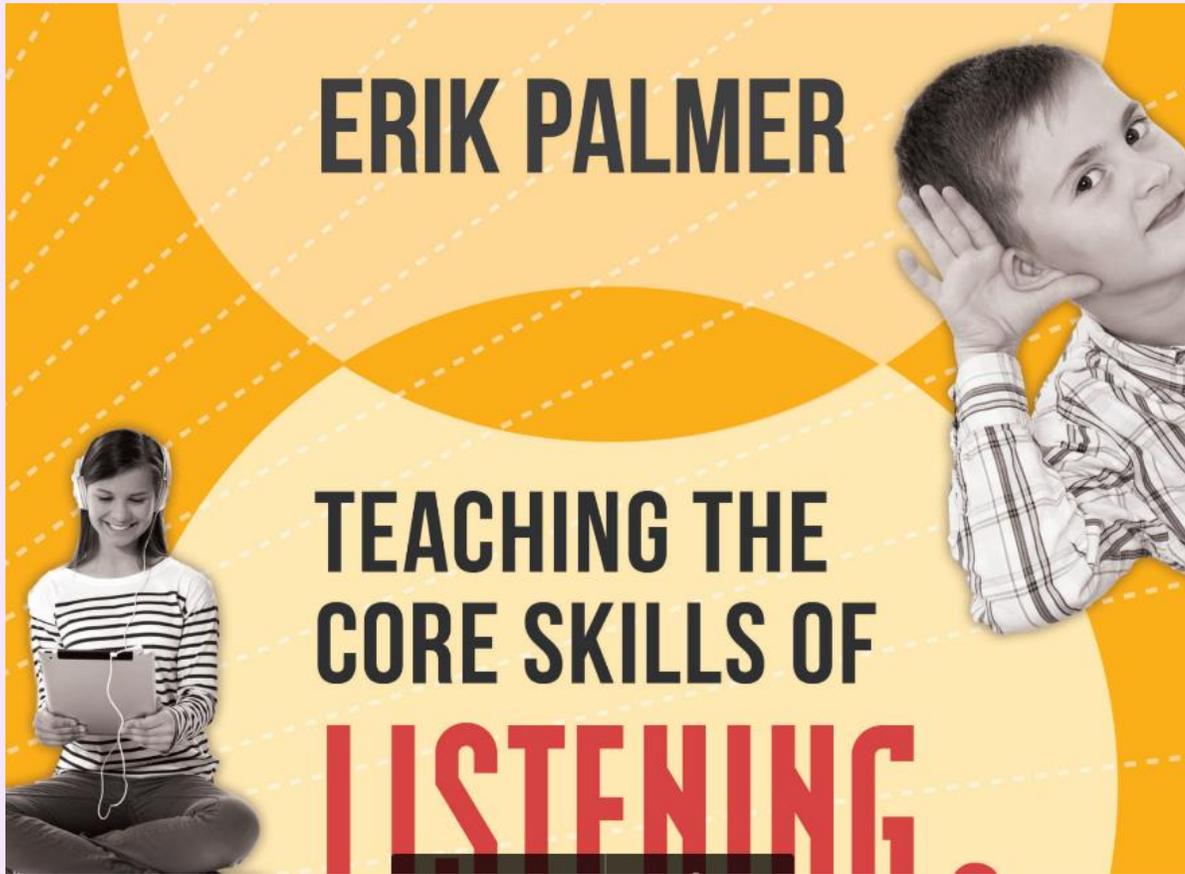


This nautilus shows how the ELLP stages sit within the New Zealand Curriculum.

## Language Development Pyramid

Skills at the bottom have to be in place before the skills above them can be developed

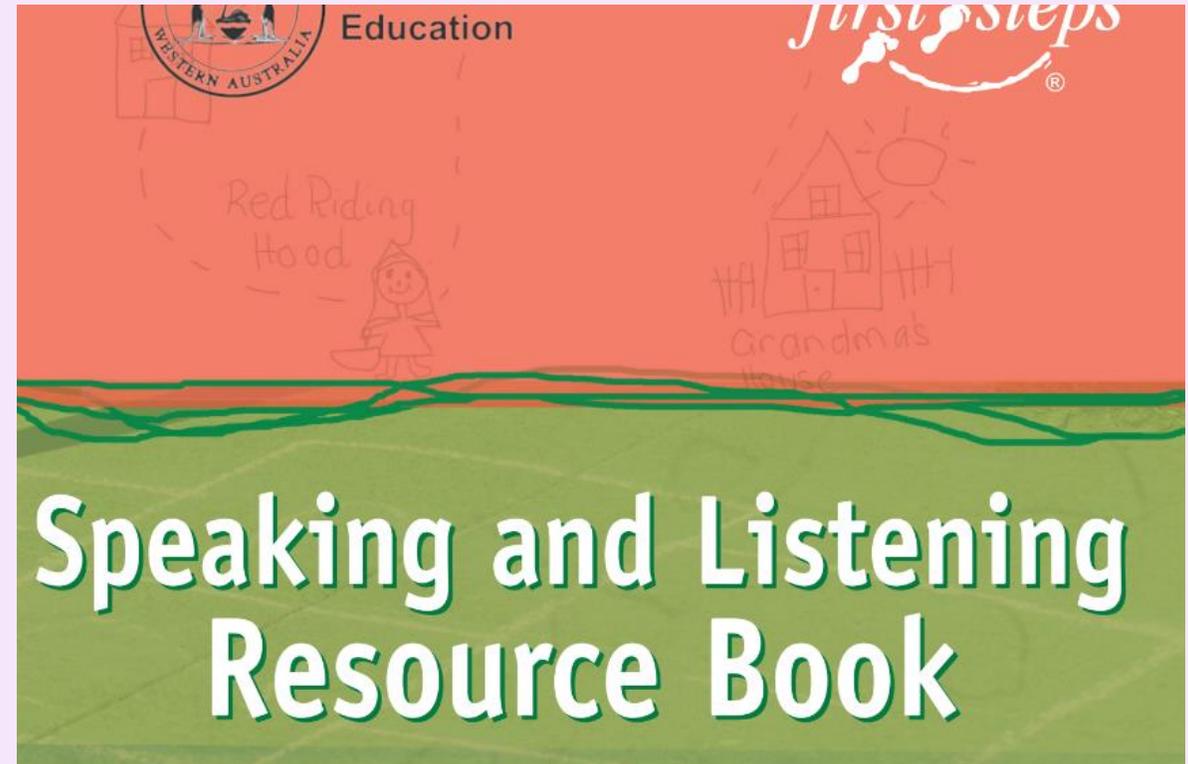
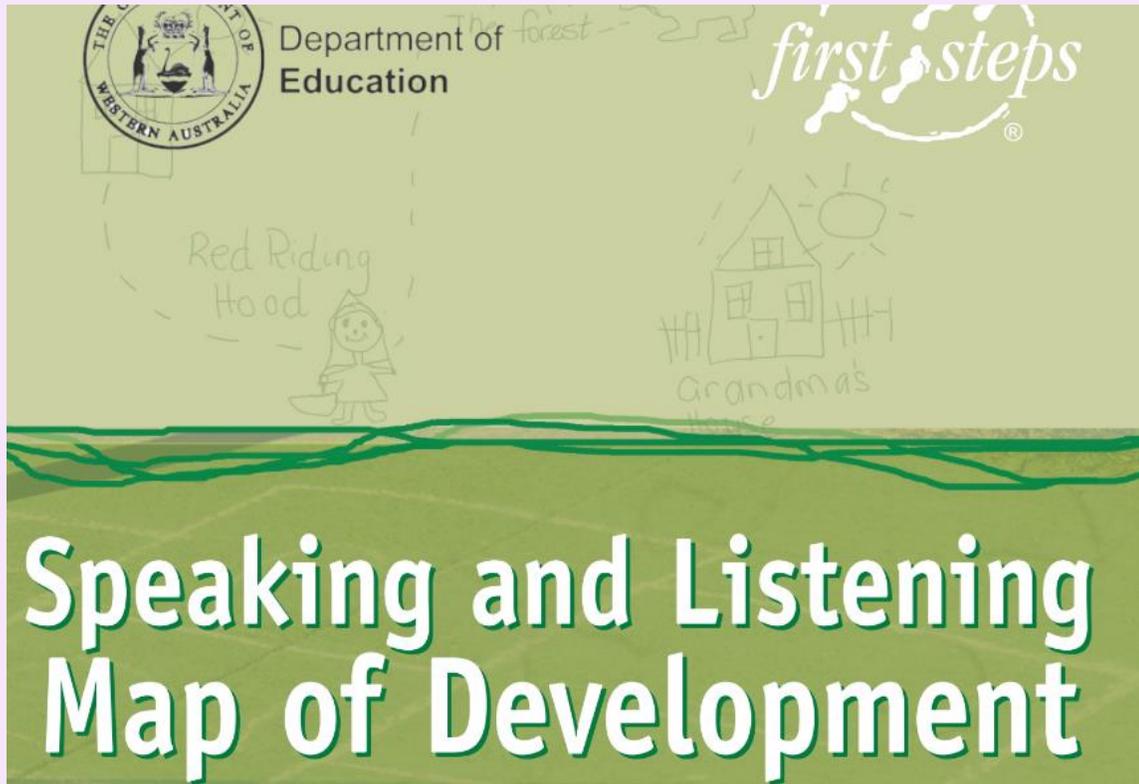


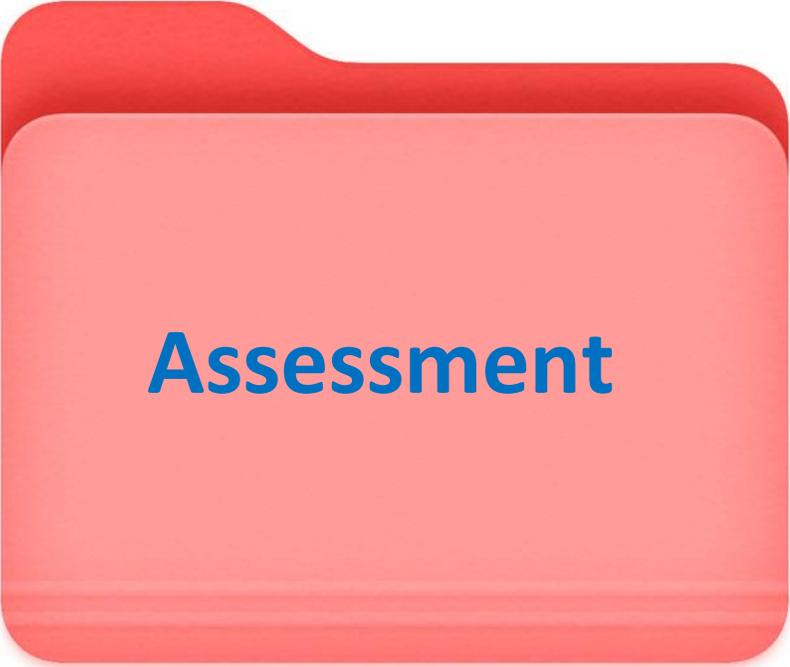


## Adjectives to describe feelings

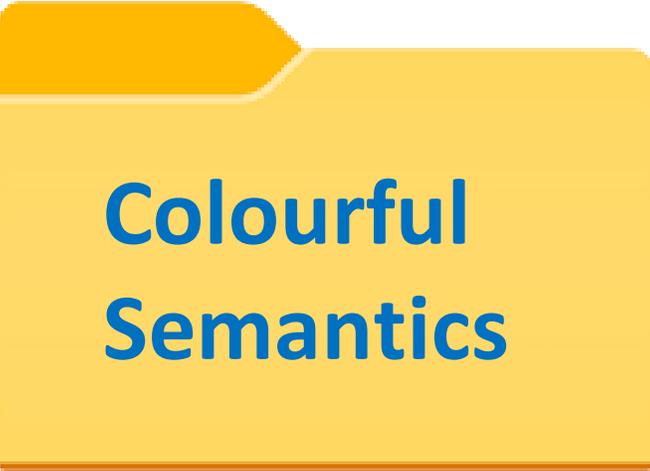
afraid	agitated	amazed	amused
anxious	apprehensive	astonished	bewildered
bored	brave	calm	cautious
charged	cheerful	clumsy	comfortable
confident	courageous	crazy	defeated
delighted	determined	dizzy	eager
elated	embarrassed	energetic	enthusiastic
excited	fantastic	fearful	fierce
fine	frantic	frightened	frustrated
furious	giddy	glad	gleeful
glorious	happy	helpless	hesitant
hungry	jittery	jolly	joyful
joyous	jubilant	lazy	lively
lucky	motivated	nervous	panicky

# First Steps



A red folder icon with a tab on the top left. The text "Assessment" is written in blue on the front panel.

**Assessment**

A yellow folder icon with a tab on the top left. The text "Colourful Semantics" is written in blue on the front panel.

**Colourful  
Semantics**

A blue folder icon with a tab on the top left. The text "HPP One Hand Approach" is written in blue on the front panel.

**HPP One  
Hand  
Approach**

# The Big Six Workshop Series

- **Workshop 6: Comprehension (final workshop in the series)**
- Thursday 22nd September 3.15-4.30pm

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83616062957?pwd=M7qVoWa\\_vWqKCIXh\\_75X\\_PDK59WfgD.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83616062957?pwd=M7qVoWa_vWqKCIXh_75X_PDK59WfgD.1)

Recording and Notes



Phonological Awareness Presentation Notes

*Links to all workshops  
(on Cluster 8 RTLB site,  
under the Connect tab)*

