



Oide

Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim
Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí
Scoile agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional
Learning of School Leaders
and Teachers

Session Two:

Developing Students'
Oracy through
Planning, Practice and
Assessment





Our Focus for this Session is to:

- reflect on how oracy currently features in classroom practice and departmental planning
- explore how structured discussion develops fluency, listening and critical thinking
- embed structured opportunities for oracy development and assessment across all year groups
- explore the reciprocal nature between oracy and writing.



Oracy

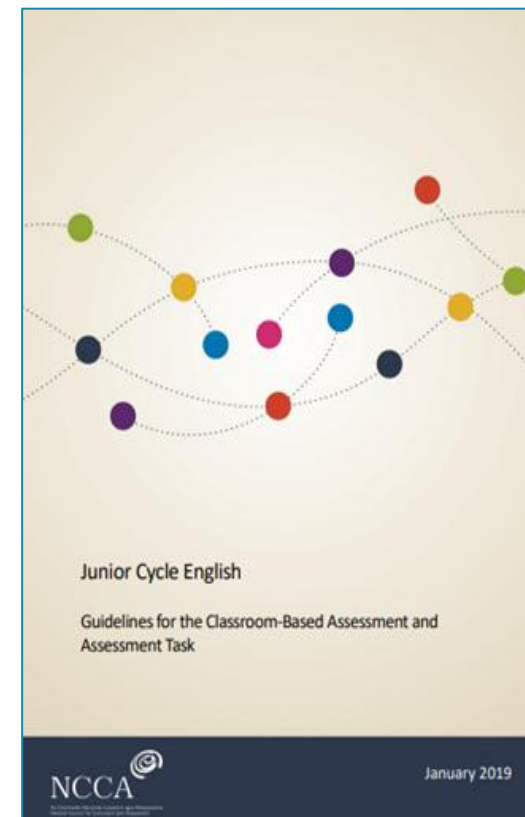
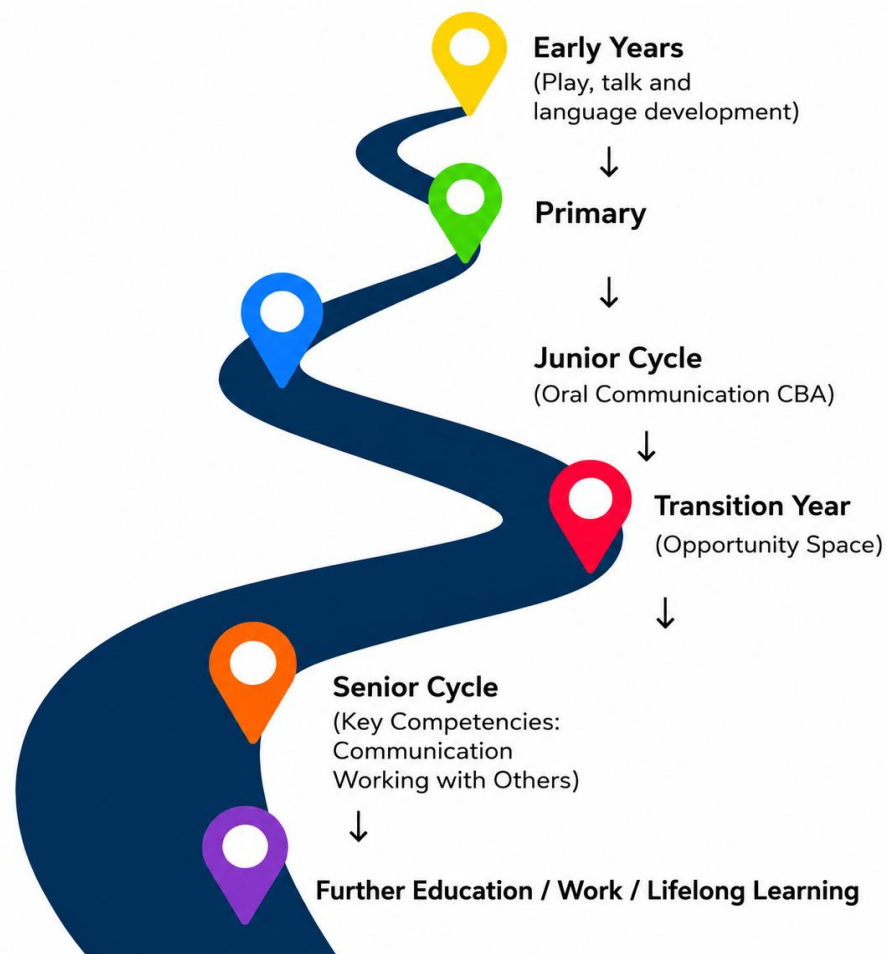
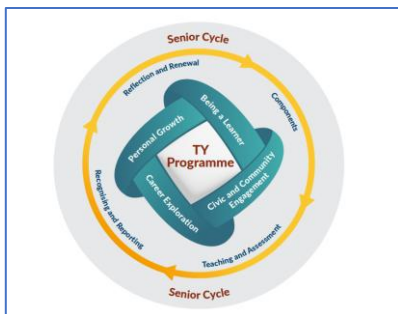
‘Through language, children do not only develop as communicators, they develop as thinkers. From an education perspective, oracy is not just about developing communication skills, it is about developing thinking skills’

Neil Mercer, ‘Oracy, The Transformative Power of Finding Your Voice’





Oracy as a Journey...



Oral Language

1. Know and use the conventions of oral language interaction, in a variety of contexts, including those at home, for a range of purposes, such as asking for information, making enquiries, listening to others, informing, explaining, arguing, persuading, advising, convincing, narrating, describing, summarising, reflecting, etc.

2. Engage actively and respectfully with others in order to learn from their experiences and to express feelings and ideas.

3. Engage in extended and constructive discussion of their own and other students' work.

4. Listen actively in order to get the gist of an account or presentation relating to their interests and purposes.

5. Deliver a short oral text, alone or in collaboration with others, using appropriate language, style and visual content for specific audiences and chosen purposes.

6. Listen to and evaluate models of oral language use to which they can refer in their own language production.

7. Choose appropriate language, style and visual content for specific audiences and chosen purposes, including, informing, narrating, describing a process.

8. Listen actively in order to interpret meaning, compare, evaluate effectiveness of, and respond to drama, poetry, media broadcasts, digital media, noting key ideas, style, tone, content and overall impact in a systematic way.

9. Apply what they have learned about the effectiveness of spoken texts to their own use of oral language.

10. Collaborate with others in order to explore and discuss understandings of spoken texts by recording, analysing, interpreting and comparing their opinions.

11. Engage with the world of oral language use as a pleasurable and purposeful activity.

12. Demonstrate how register, including grammar, text structure and word choice, varies with context and purpose in spoken texts.

13. Develop their spoken language proficiency by experimenting with word choice, being precise, stimulating appropriate responses relative to context and purpose.



Recap



To generate ideas

- Turn and Talk
- Rally Coach



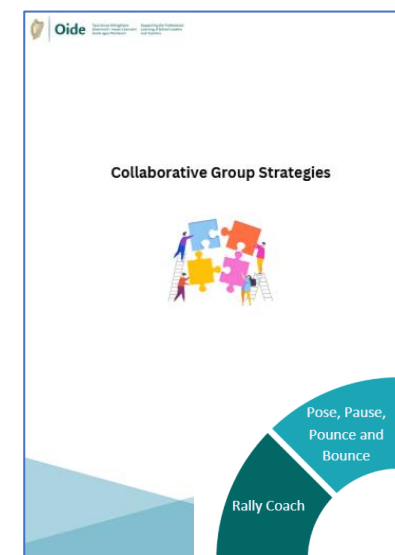
To structure dialogue

- Triads
- Spiderweb



To deepen critical thinking

- Effective Questioning
- Debating



Sharing Practice: What strategies have improved oracy in your classroom?



Sharing Practice - Department Discussion

Choose two statements.
For each discuss and record:

- One current strength
- One area for development

1. Oracy is intentionally planned for across lessons.
2. Students have regular opportunities to speak critically and engage with different perspectives.
3. Oracy is meaningfully embedded within assessment.
4. Oral discussion is used purposefully to support and develop students' writing.
5. Fluent, articulate and purposeful conversation is explicitly modelled for students.



Embedding Oracy: Skills and Assessment in Practice

Skills We are Teaching...

Expression

- Articulate ideas
- Speak fluently
- Structure ideas

Thinking

- Justify opinions
- Develop ideas
- Evaluate language

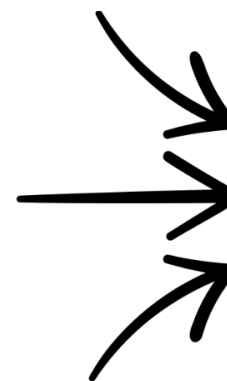
Interaction

- Listen actively
- Respond to others
- Collaborate



Classroom Approaches...

- Group discussion
- Debates
- Presentations
- Podcasts
- Socratic circles
- Role play
- Pair work
- Hot seating
- Scaffolded talk
- Speech writing/performing
- Quote justification discussions



Assessment Possibilities...





Oracy as an Assessment Tool

*Assessment is understood as ‘an ongoing process of gathering evidence to determine what students know, understand and can do’. Therefore, **assessment needs to address the process as well as the learning outcomes.***

(Department of Education Inspectorate, 2024, p.2)

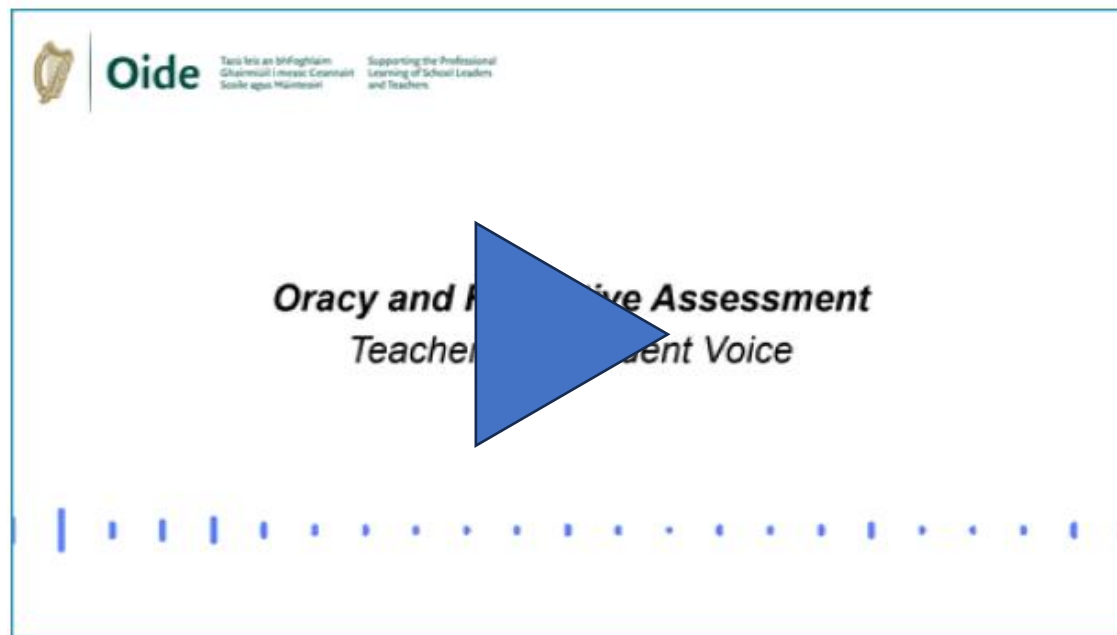
Reflection:

- What oral assessment opportunities already exist in your units of learning?





Oracy and Formative Assessment in Action



Click to play

Listen for:

- Evidence of collaboration and discussion strengthening student learning?



Allows teachers to assess thinking in real time



Supports deeper cognitive development



Encourages active engagement and participation



Develops essential communication skills



Supports formative assessment and feedback



Promotes collaborative learning



Peer Discussion



Click to play

Children of Men (2006)

Which statement can be most strongly supported using evidence from the clip?

- The opening sequence reveals a society that has lost hope
- The director trusts us to piece together this world without direct exposition



Opportunities for Oracy: What Structure Makes Possible

Reflection:

- Did the structure of the activity allow for meaningful contributions from everyone?
 - What specific scaffolds or structures might improve the quality of the discussion?
 - What adaptations might deepen learning rather than just generate talk?
- Preparation time for the planning and drafting responses
 - Providing time for students to both share and reflect on ideas with peers
 - Suitable group size to allow for participation
 - Sentence starters
 - Use simple rubrics that focus on improvement rather than errors

Reciprocal Teaching: Modelling Oracy



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Reciprocal teaching supports comprehension by teaching students to predict, clarify, question, and summarise as they read or view a text.

Task: Discussing the opening scene of *Children of Men*

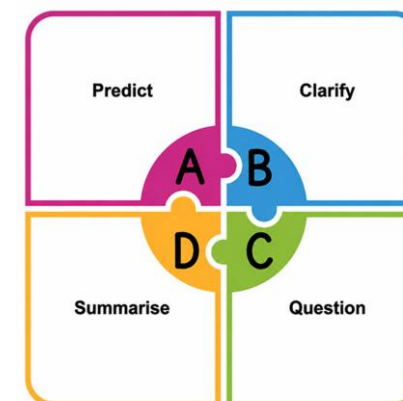
Step 1: Teacher **models** the strategies

Model: Predict – What might this story focus on?

Clarify – What needs explaining or unpacking?

Question – Why does the filmmaker show this first?

Summarise – What do we know so far?



Step 2: Guided whole-class practice and invite students to model the strategies together.

Step 3: Student-led reciprocal teaching

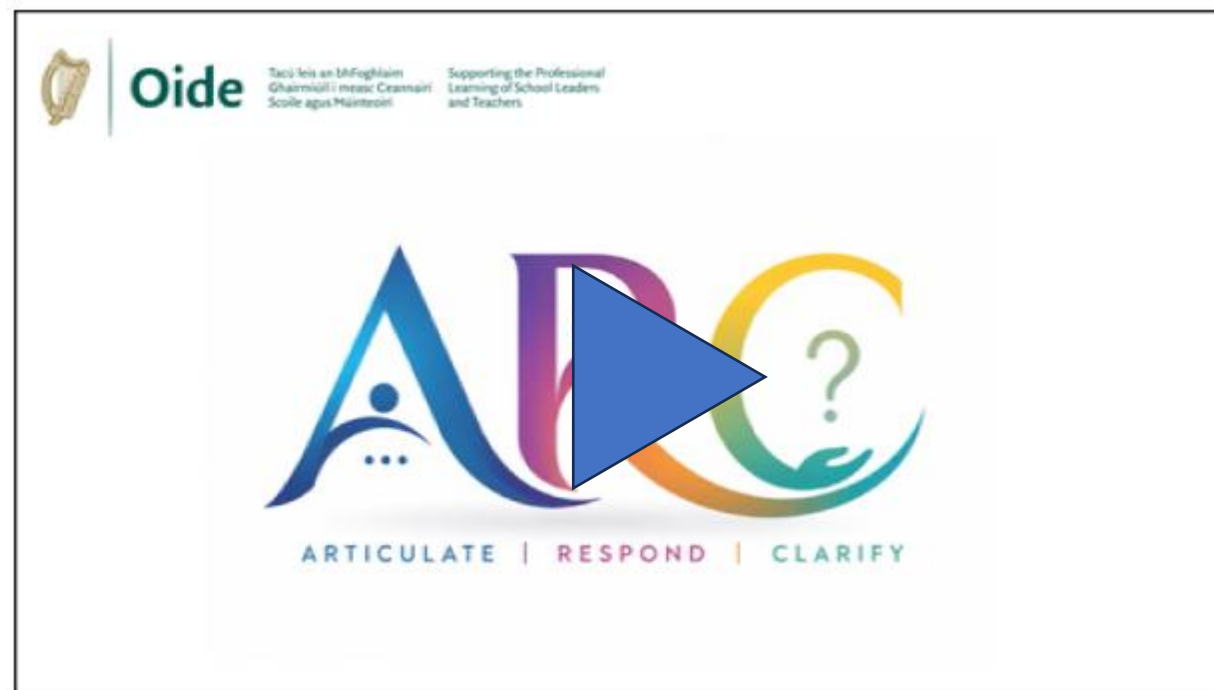
- Rewatch trailer
- Students work in groups, one role per student

Palincsar, A. S., & Brown, A. L. (1984). Reciprocal teaching of comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring activities. *Cognition and Instruction*.



Articulate – Respond – Clarify

- By structuring talk through a framework, students learn how to:
 - express ideas clearly
 - listen carefully to others
 - build on or challenge ideas respectfully
 - clarify how evidence supports thinking
 - reflect on the quality of their discussion



Click to play

How do you structure talk in your classroom?

30.



‘Habits of Discussion’



Adapted from ‘TLAC2’, Lemov, Doug, 2015.



Structured Talk Frameworks

Discuss:

1. How do structured discussion frameworks currently shape student engagement in your English classroom?
2. What opportunities and challenges might arise when adapting a framework such as ARC?
3. To what extent could a discussion framework support students in becoming more independent learners?
4. Where might a structured discussion framework fit naturally within a current unit of learning?



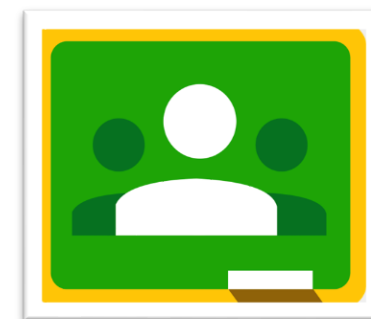
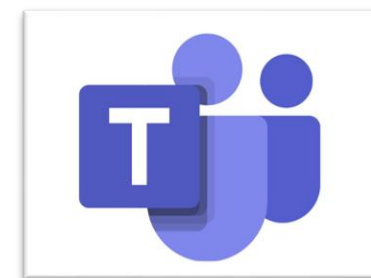


Oral Feedback

Reflection: How can we use oracy to progress learning through feedback?

You may wish to consider:

- format and structure of oral feedback
- opportunities for students to enact and respond to feedback
- peer feedback
- student dialogue as an instructional resource
- how digital tools might support feedback and collaboration





A Structured Oral Feedback Routine

Acknowledge	Build	Challenge
Start by recognising strengths and positive aspects.	Build on the idea by adding detail, examples or alternative perspectives.	Encourage deeper thinking by questioning, extending or critiquing.
“Interesting point about the importance of the bakery fire, Freya. Adi, do you agree, and why?” “Good explanation of religious beliefs about life after death, Amina. Cillian, do you agree with Amina’s argument?” “You’ve explained gender expectations clearly there, Georgia. Tara, do you agree with Georgia’s reading of the text?”	“You’ve explained urbanisation well, Leila. Can someone build on that with an example from a case study?” “You’ve shown how to simplify the expression, Alex. Who can build on that by explaining why this method works?” “That’s an interesting idea for using colour, Katy. Who can build on it by suggesting a different texture or even a different medium?”	“That’s an interesting interpretation of Abigail’s character, Poppy. Does anyone see his motivation differently?” “You’ve explained why this design could work well, Amir. Does anyone want to challenge that and suggest possible improvements?” “That method works, but does anyone disagree or see a more efficient approach to the problem?”

Adapted from ‘Literacy Essentials for Every Teacher’, Quigley, Alex, 2026.



Planning Oracy Tasks

*There is a compelling case for the role of oracy in improving educational outcomes. Through verbally **elaborating on their ideas, building on the contributions of others, and questioning the basis of each other's thinking**, students actively engage in and **monitor their own learning**, deepening their understanding of concepts and ideas.*

Gaunt and Stott (2018)





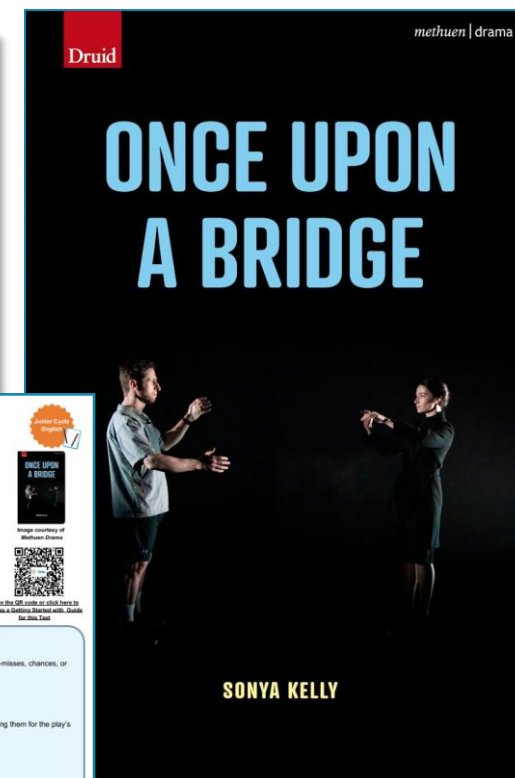
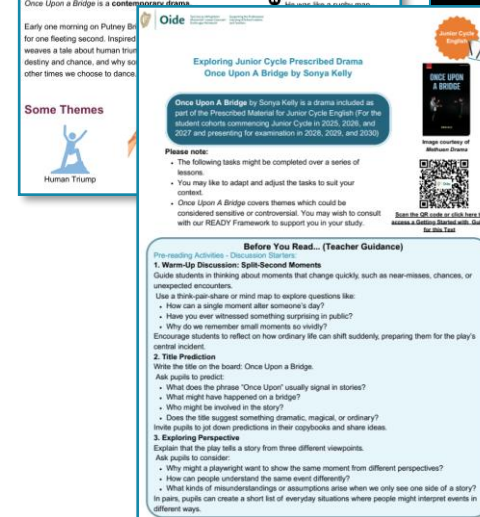
Building Summative Tasks

Task: If You Could Hear My Side

A theatre company is collecting monologues that give voice to characters whose stories are often misunderstood.

Create and perform a monologue from the perspective of a character in a text you have studied.

Use evidence from the text to develop your character's voice.





Making Key Learning Visible Through Tasks

1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

What do we want students to learn?
Start with Learning Outcomes.

ORAL LANGUAGE

- OL1** Oral language for purpose
OL5 Short oral text for audience and purpose

READING

- R3** Analyse, synthesise & evaluate
R6 Character, story & action

WRITING

- W3** Imagine, explore & narrate

What is the key learning?



KNOWLEDGE

What might students come to know?



UNDERSTANDING

What might students come to understand?



SKILLS

What might students learn to do?



VALUES

What might students come to value?

2 LEARNING EXPERIENCES

What experiences will enable students to build the knowledge, understanding, skills and values identified?



Explore a range of texts

Read, view and listen to drama, Shakespearean and contemporary monologues, poetry, podcasts and radio drama.



Discuss, analyse and compare

Explore how writers and performers create character, voice and emotion. Compare different monologues across forms and contexts.



Experiment, create and perform

Try techniques from different texts and adapt them through writing, spoken word, podcast or radio drama activities.

3 TASK DESIGN

What task will allow students to demonstrate their learning?

Create and perform a monologue from the perspective of a character in *Once Upon a Bridge*.

Use evidence from the drama to develop your character's voice.



Why this task?

It brings together understanding, evidence and performance so students can show their learning in a meaningful, authentic way.

This task will prepare students for both CBA1 and CBA2.



Creating a Task with an Oral Element

Using a Unit of Learning you brought with you today, and your reflections from Session One.

Design a summative task that emerges from the key learning experiences, includes an oral element, and allows students to demonstrate their learning.

Consider:

- Knowledge, Understanding, Skills & Values
- Assessment
- Success Criteria

Follower

BY SEAMUS HEANEY

*My father worked with a horse-plough,
His shoulders globed like a full sail strung
Between the shafts and the furrow.
The horses strained at his clicking tongue.*





CBA 1: Oral Communication Task

Inclusion begins with task design

- Design oral communication tasks that offer different routes to success
- Multiple ways for students to communicate
- Choice, creativity and student voice
- Built through everyday classroom experiences
- Strengthened through whole-school approaches

1. Performance	The student(s) may participate in a scripted or improvised performance, including drama, alone or with others.
2. Presentation	The student(s) may speak with or without notes, and a reading of a prepared script is allowable.
3. Interview	The student may respond to questions asked by the teacher and/or other students; the student may assume the role of interviewer as well as respondent in a dialogue setting.
4. Response to stimulus material	Stimulus material—visuals, written text, aural text, and so on—may be used by the teacher and/or student/s to promote, prompt or guide oral communication.



From Oracy to Writing



Structured talk helps students develop clear, coherent arguments



Discussion exposes students to multiple perspectives, strengthening personal response



Verbalising ideas improves vocabulary, sentence structure, and fluency



Oracy builds confidence and independence in expressing opinions



Listening to others promotes critical thinking and evaluation skills

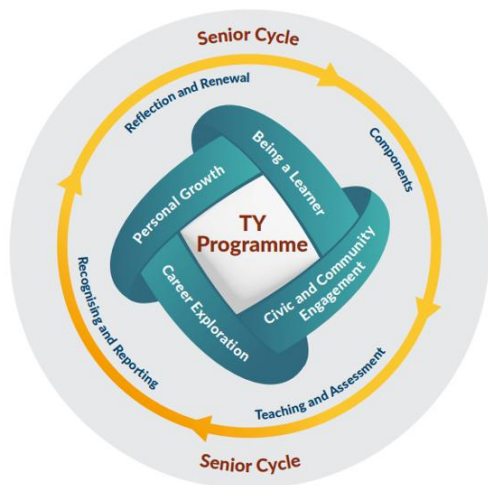
*‘Oracy, reading, and writing have a **reciprocal relationship**: language skills develop well when each element is taught in an integrated way.’*

*Ireland’s Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024-2033:
Every Learner from Birth to Young Adulthood*





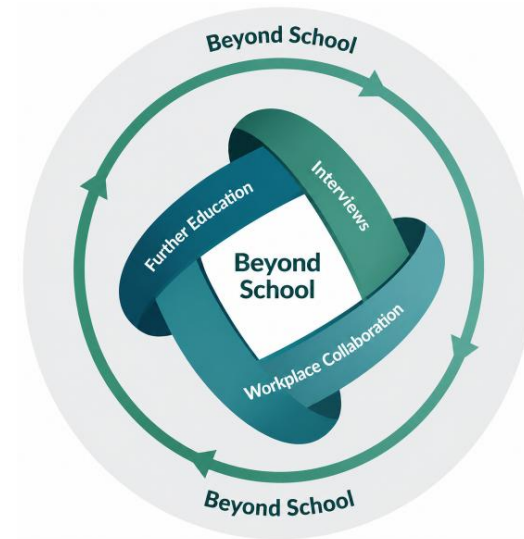
Future Proofing Oracy



Projects
Presentations
Collaboration



Communication
Working with Others



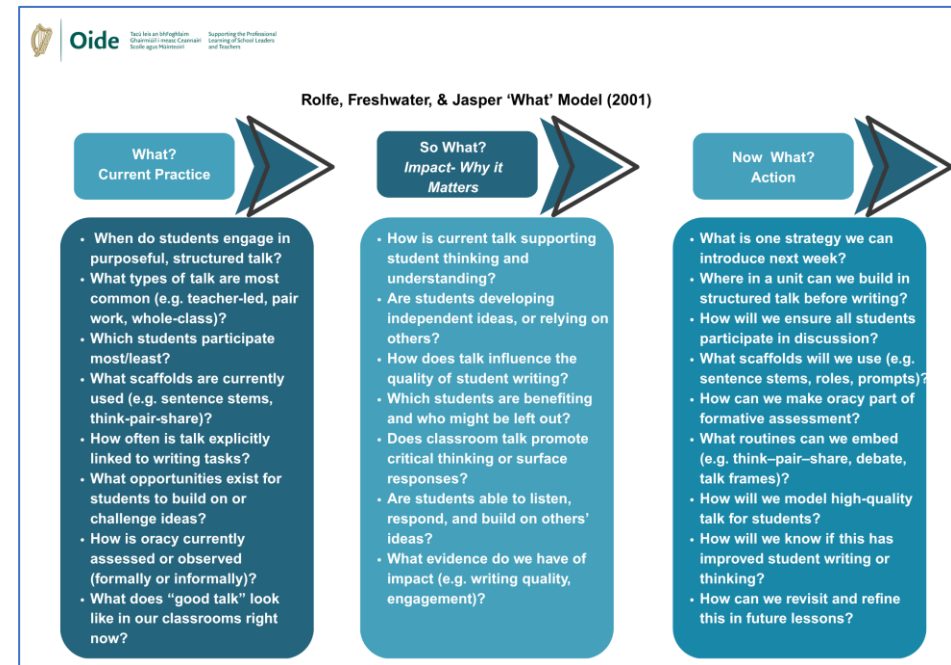
Interviews
Further Education
Workplace Collaboration



Department Reflection

Reflect on the 'reciprocal nature of oracy, reading and writing'.

1. What does this currently look like in your classroom?
2. Where could oracy strengthen reading and writing tasks?





Break - See you at 2pm.



tinyurl.com/OideEnglishMailingList

