

# The Cambridge Oracy Assessment Project

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# The Cambridge Oracy Assessment Project

Funded by the Educational Endowment Foundation and carried out with School 21, its aims are:

- To develop an **Oracy Assessment Toolkit** for teachers
- To develop an **Oracy Skills Framework** to guide the assessment and teaching of oracy

It involves us:

- Developing suitable assessment tasks for Year 7 students
- Recording children's performance on those language tasks
- Trialling the assessment of children's performances with teachers
- Assessing the effects of an oracy-led curriculum on children in School 21

# How have we gone about this?

- Reviewed earlier approaches (e.g. NFER, CT, BSU, Oracy Australia...)
- Considered the range of talk skills children need to develop
- Judged what might be expected of children as they begin Year 7
- Mapped those on to situations
- Used recent research on educational assessment to create an assessment framework

# Why create an Oracy Assessment Framework?

- Previous approaches to assessing oracy have generally been 'situation-based' rather than 'skills-based'
- Some oracy skills are applicable across situations
- Identifying skills might help teachers focus on what children need to learn

## PHYSICAL

1. Voice
2. Body

### As appropriate to the context:

- 1 i. clarity and projection of vocal presentation; ii. pronunciation; iii. tonal variation
- 2 i. gesture; ii. posture; iii. eye contact

## LINGUISTIC

3. Vocabulary
4. Language variety

- 3 i. vocabulary choice to suit topic, purpose and situation
- 4 i. dialect; ii. register; iii. accent; iv. genre; v. grammar

## COGNITIVE

5. Content choice
6. Questioning
7. Self regulation
8. Reasoning
9. Audience awareness
10. Persuasive force

- 5 i. Choice & organisation of content to convey meaning and intention
- 6 i. seeking information and clarification through questions
- 7 i. maintaining focus on task; ii. time management
- 8 i giving reasons to support views; ii. critically examining ideas and views expressed
- 9 i. taking account of level of understanding of the audience
- 10 i. use of metaphor, humour, irony, mimicry and other rhetorical devices; ii. liveliness, flair or imaginative contribution to presentation/performance

## SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL

11. Situational awareness
12. Listening and responsiveness
13. Confidence in speaking

- 11 i. taking appropriate roles; ii. sustaining dialogue; iii. turn-taking; iv. following appropriate 'ground rules'
- 12 i. responding to and building on the views of others; ii. responding appropriately to questioning; iii. summarising; iv. willingness to listen
- 13 i. willingness to take risks; ii. ability to handle a range of audience/situations; iii. active & whole-hearted participation in discussion

# Tasks

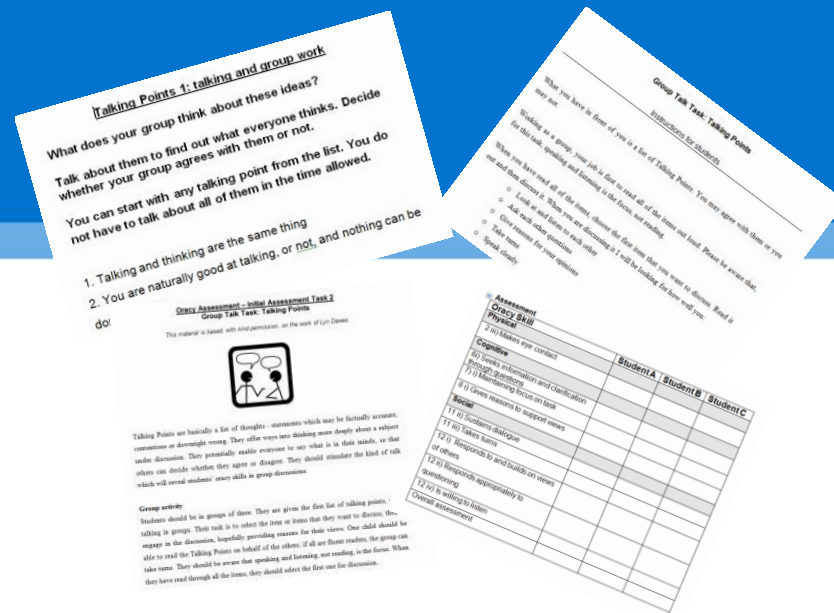
## Three Initial Assessment Tasks

- Knowledge Gap
- Talking Points
- Presentation

## Three Follow-up Assessment Tasks

## 6 assessment for learning outline tasks (content can be adapted by teachers)

## Video examples of levels of performance



### Oracy Assessment – AFL Task 5 Debating Task

**Debating** tasks should give the class the opportunity to present persuasive arguments, ask questions of others and answer questions appropriately.

Within any debate task the students should have the opportunity to show how well they can:

- Speak clearly
- Choose and organise content to persuade
- Give reasons for their opinions
- Use metaphor, humour, irony, mimicry and other rhetorical devices
- Ask and answer questions
- Build on other people's ideas
- Take risks and handle unfamiliar audiences



Oracy Skill	Student A	Student B	Student C
<b>Physical</b>			
2 iii) Makes eye contact	B/S	B	B/S
<b>Cognitive</b>			
6i) Seeks information and clarification through questions	B	B	B
7) i) Maintains focus on task	G	G	G
8 i) Gives reasons to support views	S	B/s	B/S
<b>Social</b>			
11 ii) Sustains dialogue	S	B	B/S
11 iii) Takes turns	G	G	G
12 i) Responds to and builds on views of others	S	B	B/S
12 ii) Responds appropriately to questioning	S	B	S
12 iv) Is willing to listen	G	G	G
13 iii) Active and whole-hearted participation in discussion	S	B	S/B
Overall assessment	S	B/s	B/S



# Rating Scales

- GOLD ‘consistently demonstrates this skill’
- SILVER ‘demonstrates this skill some of the time’
- BRONZE ‘rarely or never demonstrates this skill’
- Aim for empirically derived level descriptors:
  - Video exemplars of each level and of borderlines
  - Commentaries on performance characteristics alongside videos



# Comments from video review day

## **Presentations:**

“flowed from subject to subject in a purposeful way”

“One of the real things that stood out was endings wasn’t it , you know and how they signed off from what they were doing... there was a completeness to what they did”

## **Talking Points:**

“they look at the person who’s not speaking, to invite them in, it’s all done through eyes”

“You can see she’s holding back actually, there’s something about her body language ... she could be talking all the time ... she does ask for consensus ... very sophisticated.”

“She was talking a lot but I don’t know how much of it is conversation”

# Validity, reliability and manageability

- Validity
  - Video review days with teachers and experts - rank orders
  - Construct relevance and construct representation
  - What inferences can teachers make from results?
- Reliability
  - Inter-rater agreement – Kappas
  - Benchmarking with video exemplars
- Manageability
  - Whole class activity, observing a sample

# Results from paired comparisons

## Presentations

	Ranking	Overall Rating
DA	1	G
JC	2	G
LM	3	S
JM	4	S
CC	5	S
JD	6	S
JW	7	S
HI	8	B

“Until we saw this he hadn’t really shown in class what this baseline test showed us ... he’s a really articulate child ...here he showed more than we’d seen...in lessons he’s quite quiet” (Year 7 oracy and drama teacher)

“This really has helped enormously in developing the focus of our teaching, particularly for group work” (Year 7 English teacher)