Children's Services

Secondary Drama Conference

20th October 2026

Steering Group Practice Sharing – Session 1

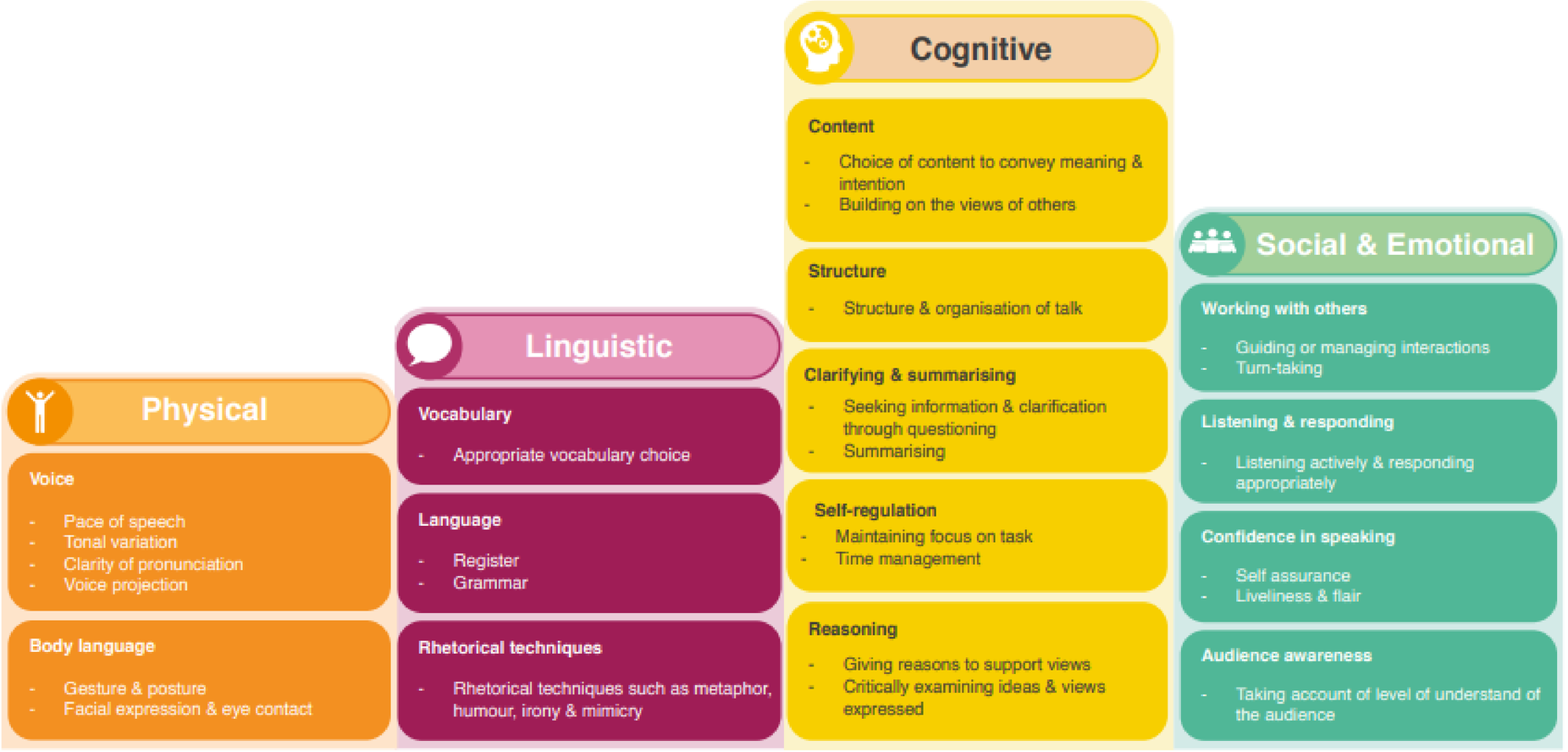
Oracy developed through improvisation

Hampshire County Council

James Drake, Brookfield Community School

The Oracy Framework

Use the Oracy Framework to understand the physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional skills that enable successful discussion, inspiring speech and effective communication.



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ACTIVE LISTENING

- Turn and Talk – Students know the rules and can identify them.
- Share Talk Time – Students make equal time for each other to talk.
- Conversations show flow and response – Students listen and respond appropriately in conversations.

BUILDING ON VIEWS OF OTHERS

- Offer Ideas – Students show confidence, developing and offering their own ideas
- Justify opinions – Students can explain their viewpoints
- Ask questions – Students confidently ask relevant questions

SEEKING CLARIFICATION

- Ask for Help – Students know when & how to ask for support
- Clearly explain problems – Students can articulate specifically what they find difficult and the extra information they need
- Reinforce understanding - Students can rephrase and use examples to help others

September 25 / February 26

March / July 26

METHODS USED IN LESSONS

FEB / MARCH





SEEKING CLARIFICATION

- Ask for Help – Students know when & how to ask for support
- Clearly explain problems – Students can articulate specifically what they find difficult and the extra information they need
- Reinforce understanding - Students can rephrase and use examples to help others

ANALOGY BUILDING

MAINTAING FOCUS

USING SENTENCE STEMS

DEVELOPING VOCABULARY

- Offer Ideas – Students show confidence, developing and offering their own ideas
- Justify opinions – Students can explain their viewpoints
- Ask questions – Students confidently ask relevant questions

BUILDING ON VIEWS OF OTHERS

FEB / MARCH 26

METHODS USED IN LESSONS





APRIL / MAY / JUNE

SEEKING CLARIFICATION

- Ask for Help – Students know when & how to ask for support
- Clearly explain problems – Students can articulate specifically what they find difficult and the extra information they need
- Reinforce understanding - Students can rephrase and use examples to help others

INTERVIEWS

DEBATING

FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS

PUBLIC SPEECHES

STORYTELLING

BEING PERSUASIVE

BUILDING ON VIEWS OF OTHERS

- Offer Ideas – Students show confidence, developing and offering their own ideas
- Justify opinions – Students can explain their viewpoints
- Ask questions – Students confidently ask relevant questions

APRIL / JULY 26

Improvisation

KS3 – SOW – Summer 1

LESSON 1

Lesson 1

- To understand what Improvisation is and the general rules to follow

- To use Improvisation to help us develop Oracy - persuasive skills

What is Improvisation?

- Improvisation is creating or performing something on the spot without prior planning or preparation. It involves responding spontaneously to the situation, using creativity and intuition.

- *“Any idiot can get up and do it”*

- Keith Johnstone – a groundbreaking creator and master teacher of improvisational theatre methods (1933 – 2023)

Some helpful rules / tips for Improvisation

1. Don’t block an offer

- An offer is something someone says in an improvisation e.g. “Would you like to eat this carrot?”
- Blocking an offer is when you don’t accept their reality…
- “There is not carrot there!”
- OR when you close it down entirely
- “No.”
- Instead – Accept the improvisers offer OR you can say no, with extra information to help move the performance on
- E.g. “I’d love a carrot, does it come in any other colour?” OR “No, I can’t eat a carrots unless they are completely blue”

Some helpful rules / tips for Improvisation

2. Say the first thing you think of (within reason)

- A lot of people can feel a bit worried about Improvisation, because they think they will be boring or un-original.
- The truth is, keeping the pace of a performance going is far more important than trying to think up something funny or unique.
- If you pause for ages trying to think up something to say, it becomes worse than just saying the obvious.
- For this reason, you should say the first thing you think of when improvising, to keep the pace and momentum of the performance going.
- **(within reason) – We are still in a school – so avoid inappropriate language**

Some helpful rules / tips for Improvisation

3. Commit to your scenario

- When performing improvisation, you will likely be given a task, setting or character with little to no preparation time.
- Do you best to put yourself in that role quickly and act like you think that character would, in that situation.

4. Follow general performance skills

- Have a loud clear voice
- Face the audience
- Use Physical, Vocal and Spatial performing skills as appropriate (PVS Skills)

Some helpful rules / tips for Improvisation

5. If stuck, use the Emergency Line of Dialogue

- If for some reason you go blank on stage, do not panic, you will always have someone else on stage with you
- If that happens when it is your turn to speak, pass the performance back to your partner(s) with the emergency line.
- **“Oh my, what is that?!”**
- This will allow another performer to move the performance on, while you re-compose yourself.

Some helpful rules / tips for Improvisation

6. Support others, make each other look good and don’t worry about mistakes.

- Improvisation is about exploring performing skills and ideas on stage. Help each other when on stage but do so staying in character.
- If mistakes happen, don’t focus on them, try to move the performance on and work around them.

Rules for Improvisation - Summary

- 1. Don’t block an offer
- 2. Say the first thing you think of (within reason)
- 3. Commit to your scenario
- 4. Follow general performance skills
- 5. If stuck, use the Emergency Line of Dialogue
- 6. Support others, make each other look good and don’t worry about mistakes.

Lets Improvise!

- Session 1 – Persuasive Skills

You may know some of these from English

- Emotional Appeal
- Logical Appeal
- Credibility
- Rhetorical Questions
- Repetition
- Use of decisive words (Must / Should / Definitely)
- Using Figurative Language
- Rule of Three
- Emotive Language
- Exaggeration

Zombie Apocalypse

- Divide into Pairs (A & B)
- A Zombie Apocalypse has broken out.
- Fortunately ,there is one space left in a nearby bunker for you A.
- A – You are at the Zombie Bunker gate as an applicant hoping B will let you in.
- B – You are a resident and leader of this bunker – You need to assess how useful this person will be in your new society; you only let in people who can prove themselves valuable.
- A - You have 5 minutes to convince B.
- B - Do not decide until the time is up, but you can ask as many questions as you like.
- Good Luck – By the way … A – Your prior job was “Musician”
- GO!

Zombie Apocalypse – Part 2

- B - You NOW have 5 minutes to convince A.
- A - Do not decide until the time is up, but you can ask as many questions as you like.
- Good Luck – By the way … B – Your prior job was “Author”
- GO!

Zombie Apocalypse - Volunteers

- Volunteer - You have 5 minutes to convince the class vote.
- The class - Will not decide until the time is up, but as a class we can ask as many questions as you like, by putting our hands up and waiting to be chosen by the teacher who will facilitate.
- Good Luck – By the way … Your prior job will be decided by your teacher…
- GO!

Lets Improvise some more!

- Session 1 – Persuasive Skills

You may know some of these from English

- Emotional Appeal
- Logical Appeal
- Credibility
- Rhetorical Questions
- Repetition
- Use of decisive words (Must / Should / Definitely)
- Using Figurative Language
- Rule of Three
- Emotive Language
- Exaggeration

Park Bench

- Two students start of a park bench. Having a lovely conversation in character at the Park.
- A new student will enter and ask one student if they can sit on the bench. When asked why they will need to have a good explanation as to why they need to sit on the park bench.
- The person sitting can refuse to get up ONCE ONLY.
- If they do refuse, the person trying to sit down MUST expand their reason with EXTRA DETAILS to convince the person the leave.
- Once an original bench sitter has left, and the new person has sat down on the bench, there will be two people sat on the bench having a lovely conversation and the process will begin again…

Improvisation

KS3 – SOW – Summer 1

LESSON 2

RECAP - Rules for Improvisation - Summary

- 1. Don’t block an offer
- 2. Say the first thing you think of (within reason)
- 3. Commit to your scenario
- 4. Follow general performance skills
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- 6. Support others, make each other look good and don’t worry about mistakes.

Lesson 2

- To continue to use the rules of improvisation

- To use Improvisation to help us develop Oracy - Debating

Lets Improvise!

- Session 2 – Debating Skills

- Building a good argument

Structure – What you believe

Reason – Why you believe it

Evidence – Have proof / examples / logic

Link back – How it supports your view

Listen and confidently respond to others views, by reinforcing your view as stronger / the logical choice

- Be flexible and adapt
- Remain respectful
- Keep composure
- Have new examples ready

Yes and… Yes But…

- Yes and…
- In pairs – Follow up one person's response to a given topic with an additional idea that builds on the first. This can be in attitude, or specific details, but the intention to accept and build must be there.
- E.g.
- A – Schools should operate a 4 day week
- B – Yes and the non-school day should be Friday
- A – Yes and that would mean we would have time to do homework and go out too
- B – Yes and out teachers would be less tired all the time…

- 5 Minutes - Have a go with the following topic "Schools should let you use phones at break and lunchtime"

Yes and… Yes But…

- Yes But…
- In pairs – Offer up an alternative idea or explain why an idea needs altering or changing. You might find the conversation a bit more jerky, but used well this can move a conversation on from going round in circles. E.g.
- A – All students need to study Maths up to the age of 18.
- B – Yes, but what about those students who hate Maths?
- A – Yes but more Maths teaching means those who don’t like it can catch up and understand more
- B – Yes but you’d need to find and recruit more Maths teachers…

- 5 Minutes - Have a go with the following topic “We should change our school uniform to be all Pink!”

Whole Class - Yes and… Yes But…

- 5 Minutes - Have a go with a topic decided by your teacher
- Teacher will start with a statement
- You can respond with your hand up to say “Yes and” OR “Yes but” to agree or disagree – the debate needs to last the time limit.
- Challenge - Can you class debate on this topic for 5 minutes?
- Extra Challenge – Can everyone contribute at least once?

Lets Improvise!

- Session 2 – Debating Skills

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Two Realities

- In pair, A and B will be sat next to each other. They will both believe they are in a particular place and location. Their job is to convince the other performer to accept that their own reality is a lie and that their partners reality is the real one. (Use your debating skills)
- E.g.
- A – Is sat at a bus stop waiting for the bus.
- B – Is sat on a rollercoaster ride.

- The improvisation ends if one person purposefully or accidentally accepts the others reality OR if time runs out.
- 10 MINS - Experiment and practice with your partner – Restart if you need to with a new location / idea

Two Realities

- Invite new combinations of performers to play “Two Relatiies” in front of the class.
- See how they do.

Improvisation

KS3 – SOW – Summer 1

LESSON 3

RECAP - Rules for Improvisation - Summary

- 1. Don’t block an offer
- 2. Say the first thing you think of (within reason)
- 3. Commit to your scenario
- 4. Follow general performance skills
- 5. If stuck, use the Emergency Line of Dialogue
- 6. Support others, make each other look good and don’t worry about mistakes.

Lesson 3

- To continue to use the rules of improvisation

- To use Improvisation to help us develop Oracy – identifying missing information

Lets Improvise!

- Session 3 – Identifying Missing Information

- Ask Questions to help reason what you do know and what you do not know

Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

- What background information / contenxt do you already know?

- Use logical reasoning

- Actively listen to all available information and resources

- Evaluate and analyse

- Pay attention to details

Party Quirks

- Groups of 5 - One person is the host of a party. They will turn away so they cannot hear the suggestions of the rest of the group.
- The remaining players receive a “Quirk” for example:
- A strange behaviour, a personality trait, a physical habit, a fictional identity, an animal they have become, etc. They should be **fun, exaggerated and guessable.**
- The host returns and begins to set up their party. Each guest arrives one at a time with a doorbell ring. On entering the party they must immediately take on their quirk and maintain it throughout the scene. Guests can interact with the host, the room and each other.
- The host must figure out what the quirk is while the actors are performing, through natural conversation and observations. When the host believes they have it, they must call out the quirk.
- The game continues until the host has guessed all quirks or until the time has run out

Lets Improvise!

- Session 3 – Identifying Missing Information

- Ask Questions to help reason what you do know and what you do not know

Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

- What background information / contenxt do you already know?

- Use logical reasoning

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- Evaluate and analyse

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Traitors

- Sit in a circle – Explain that you are visitors to a fancy manor house for a detective convention, but that some of you are not who they appear to be. There are a group of traitors here who plan to murder and kill as many of you as possible out of pure revenge for previous crimes you foiled. Your job is to banish the traitors before they kill you off – Can you do it?
- Begin with a Circle of Trust – Each in turn say “I am not a Traitor”.
- Close eyes.
- Teacher taps one (or more) students on shoulder. They are now the traitors and have the power to murder, during the murder round. BUT they must aim to convince others that they are detectives.
- Accusation Round – Teacher is the facilitator – Eyes open - open a conversation for who people would like to accuse – after an accusation, with justification, the accused can respond verbally, to try to convince others. Once 3 people have been accused, a vote takes place. The person with the most votes is banished. They must reveal if they are a Traitor or Detective to the circle. Then the circle closes their eyes again.
- Murder Round – The Traitors can open their eyes when directed and agree who to murder (may be more than one – Teacher decides) – Then traitors close their eyes again.
- The teacher reveals who has been murdered – that player leaves the circle. And then accusation round begins again.
- The game continues with Accusation round and Murder round until either all Traitors have been banished OR all Detectives have been murdered.

Improvisation

KS3 – SOW – Summer 1

LESSON 4

RECAP - Rules for Improvisation - Summary

- 1. Don’t block an offer
- 2. Say the first thing you think of (within reason)
- 3. Commit to your scenario
- 4. Follow general performance skills
- 5. If stuck, use the Emergency Line of Dialogue
- 6. Support others, make each other look good and don’t worry about mistakes.

Lesson 4

- To continue to use the rules of improvisation

- To use Improvisation to help us develop Oracy – Interview Skills

RECAP - Rules for Improvisation - Summary

- 1. Don’t block an offer
- 2. Say the first thing you think of (within reason)
- 3. Commit to your scenario
- 4. Follow general performance skills
- 5. If stuck, use the Emergency Line of Dialogue
- 6. Support others, make each other look good and don’t worry about mistakes.

Question Tennis

- Find a partner (A & B)
- You now have to have a conversation where you can only ask questions and answer with another question.
- The conversation must flow / make sense
- You cannot repeat a question that has already been asked.
- When someone answers without asking a question, or says Yes or No, they lose that point and the next rally begins.
- Use the rules of tennis to decide who wins each game. (0, 15, 30, 40, deuce, advantage, game) See how many points you can win

Alphabet Argument

- Find a partner (A & B)
- You now have to have an argument about a topic your teacher will give you (Your teacher can change the topic whenever they like so be listening)
- You and your partner need to verbally argue, taking it in turns, BUT you must start your response each time with a word that starts with the next corresponding letter of the alphabet.
- E.g. Topic – WHAT IS THE BEST FRUIT?
- A – Apples are clearly the best
- B – Bet I can think of a better fruit
- A – Can you?
- B – Definitely
- A – Eggs aren’t a Fruit

NEWS REPORT

- Groups of 4 (A, B, C AND D)
- Your Teacher will decide a Topic:

- A – You are a News Reporter on the street interviewing about a particular topic
- B – You are the Victim of this event
- C – You are an Eye Witness
- D – You are an Expert on this type of thing
- Improvise the News Report on this issue

- Topic 1 - Choice
- - Dinosaurs have returned to planet Earth and they are not happy

NEWS REPORT

- Groups of 4 (A, B, C AND D)
- Your Teacher will decide a Topic:

- A – You are a News Reporter on the street interviewing about a particular topic
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- C – You are an Eye Witness
- D – You are an Expert on this type of thing
- Improvise the News Report on this issue

- Topic 2 - Choice
- - Aliens have made contact with Earth and they seem to want something…

NEWS REPORT

- Groups of 4 (A, B, C AND D)
- Your Teacher will decide a Topic:

- A – You are a News Reporter on the street interviewing about a particular topic
- B – You are the Victim of this event
- C – You are an Eye Witness
- D – You are an Expert on this type of thing
- Improvise the News Report on this issue

- Topic 3 - Choice
- - All the cutlery in the world has vanished